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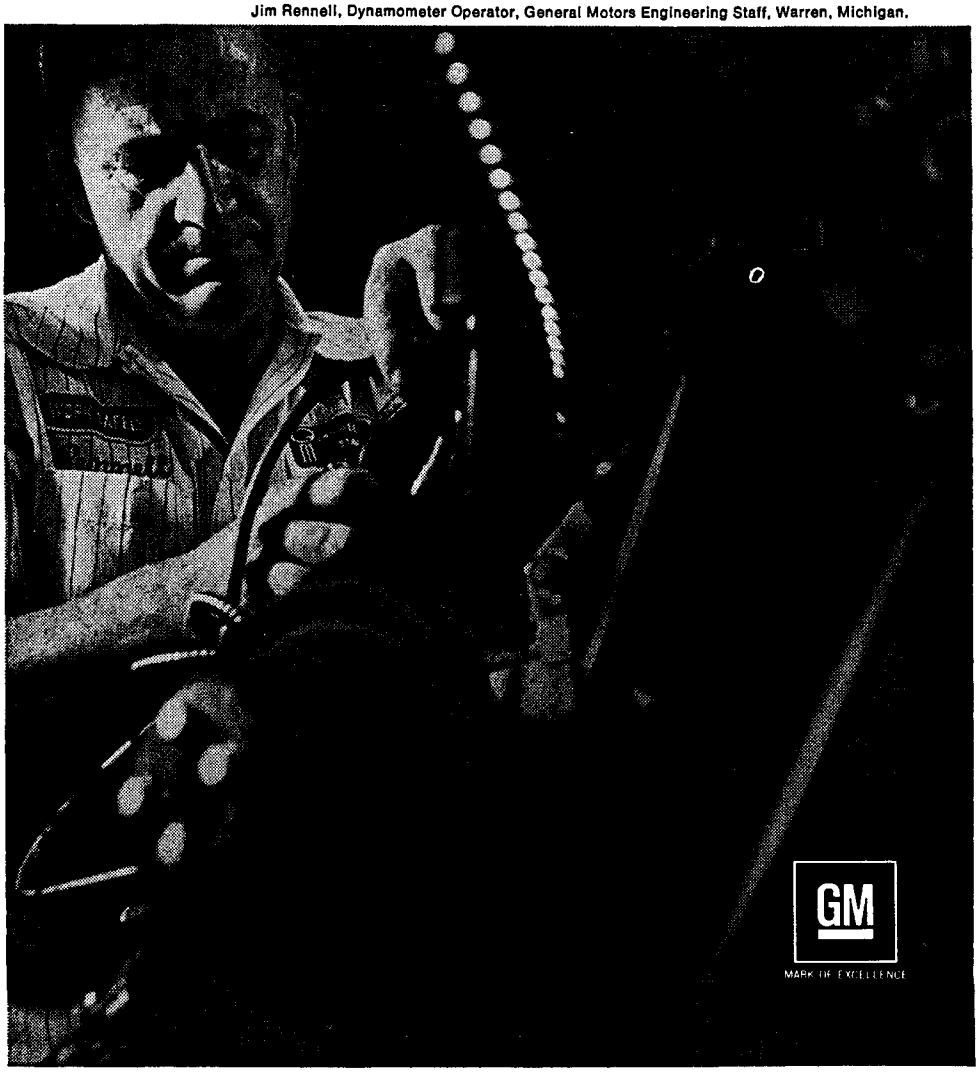

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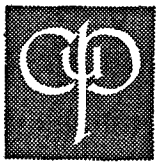

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If You Don't Mind My Saying So . . . . . .

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

Civil disobedience, considered as a right as well as a duty, has seldom been so widely discussed or so often taken for granted as at the present moment. Thoreau's essay is frequently cited; and fairly often even read. But I doubt that its popularity is as much an influence as a symptom of the growing acceptance of the attitudes it defends. Vietnam, the least popular war we have ever engaged in, has certainly given to many a new eagerness to legitimatize disobedience, even though "military necessity" has usually been widely accepted as overriding all usual or peacetime prerogatives.

I am myself so much a dissenter by temperament that I regularly feel somewhat conservative in the presence of liberals and very liberal in the presence of conservatives. That, I suppose, makes me balance out as a liberal. Even so, I have been wondering a good deal lately, not about the *duty* of civil disobedience which, under certain circumstances, some may call absolute, but of the *right* to civil disobedience, which is a different thing. Obviously, if the right were recognized by authority as absolute, then it would not be disobedience at all but merely one kind of obedience. And just as obviously, so it seems to me, any government that granted an unlimited right to disobedience would be no government at all but an anarchy. Yet when I hear the arguments of some who have recently got into more or less serious trouble, an unlimited right to disobey without suffering any consequences seems to be exactly what they demand.

Just how much disobedience without penalty can a government permit without ceasing to be a government at all? Is there any way in which it can define or impose limits without stifling legitimate differences of opinion or forcing some of the best of its citizens to violate their deepest convictions?

I have pondered this question which seems to be usually answered offhand both by the dissenters themselves and by those against whom their dissent is directed. I have no answers entirely satisfactory to me and only such as, I fear, will be a good deal less than that to many. But I do not remember having heard them stated in plain language.

To begin with, one must, I think, take it for granted that both the extent of the right and the seriousness of the duty depend upon the seriousness of the thing involved—to the protester on the one hand, and to the authority on the other. Members of an older generation may be repelled by beards and long hair on the faces and heads of young males, but these are not serious offenses against the elders, and youth's right to cultivate them I should rate as absolute. Refusal to be vaccinated against smallpox, so most people would agree, involves consequences so serious that authority has the duty to refuse to recognize it as a right even though obedience may involve an agony of conscience for the members of some religious sects. An impulse to drive an automobile on the left side of the road is, on the one hand, not likely to involve an agony of conscience if it is denied fulfillment, and it involves serious consequences if indulged.

There is no real problem in any of these cases. But there *are* real problems when profound moral convictions dictate defi-

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ance of what authority, supported by a majority of the citizens subject to it, deems to be of serious, crucial, and even tragic importance. An obvious example is, of course, refusal to abide by the regulations or to fulfill the obligations imposed as a consequence of armed conflict. During World Wars I and II, the consensus in favor of authority's contention that enforcement of its regulations was a matter of life and death was so inclusive that there was little opposition to strict enforcement. Because there is a less overwhelming consensus in regard to Vietnam, because of a more widespread feeling that we are not defending our lives or even engaged in a morally justifiable operation, there is a much more serious conflict of ideas. Is draft card burning and a refusal to serve in the armed forces a right as well as, for those who feel strongly enough, a duty?

Being an admirer of Thoreau, I am sorry to have to say that, so far as his conduct as distinguished from his pronouncements is concerned, his answer is far from conclusive. He refused to pay his poll tax because he opposed the Mexican War and, perhaps, opposed that war with a special indignation because he did not want another slave state added to the Union. That he did not oppose violence under all circumstances is evident from his passionate support of John Brown. And although he died just as the Civil War was getting underway, his letters seemed to suggest that he did not so much oppose as simply wash his hands of it.

But that is not the point. For refusing to pay his poll tax, he was arrested, put in jail, and released the next day when someone paid the tax for him. He is said to have been angry, but so far as I know this was the end of the affair. He never went to jail again and I do not know whether that was because he, or someone else, paid next time, because the authorities agreed to accept his refusal, or for some other reason not anywhere in the record. It seems, then, that Thoreau gives us no usable answer. And the only one that I can suggest involves the distinction between a duty on the one hand and a right on the other.

When an individual feels strongly enough that authority is demanding something monstrously wicked—like the Nazi demand that all Jews be betrayed to their deaths—then, as many will say, the duty to disobey is absolute, although even they may be willing to pardon those who cannot bring themselves to face the terrible consequences of doing their duty. And there are those today who feel that their duty to refuse any support to the war in Vietnam is almost, if not quite, as unqualified.

But is the *right* to disobey, without paying any price for the disobedience, as absolute as the duty? Many seem to think so. But if the right be recognized as no less absolute than the duty, then does not authority cease to exist and anarchy result?

For myself I can come up with no solution to the dilemma except to say this: in practice, those whose conscience demands that they defy authority in ways that involve great consequences must be willing to accept some penalty. They have no right to expect to be exemplary martyrs without suffering some degree of martyrdom. No cross, no crown. But a crown without a cross is precisely what many seem to demand as a right.

How, unless refusing to register for the draft involves some penalty, can one possibly distinguish between the truly conscientious objector and the youth who (for reasons I can readily sympathize with) just prefers the comforts of home to the discomforts and dangers of war? I have no great enthusiasm for Vietnam, but as long as authority, together with a majority of our citizens, does support it, I cannot see how we could afford to say simply: exercise freely your right to practice civil disobedience.

I can imagine shocked protest from many liberals to this answer to the question posed by civil disobedience. Am I, they will demand, defending tyranny, justifying an inquisition, and so forth, and so forth? Not quite. Dissenters are not now burned at the stake. So far as I am concerned, I would much prefer a few years in prison (the worst anyone proposes) to fighting in Vietnam—provided, of course, it were

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purely a choice of evils, quite aside from any question of my feelings about the rights and wrongs of this particular conflict. I doubt the deep sincerity of anyone who believes himself a victim of cruel persecution because he is assessed some penalty that has, at least, the effect of testing his sincerity. And I am not sure that religious as well as purely secular scruples might not reasonably be submitted to a similar test. If anyone can come up with a more satisfactory solution to the problem of defining and limiting the right to civil disobedience, let him write a Letter to the Editor.

I must, however, warn him in advance that I do not regard as satisfactory any answer that comes down to saying that in a free society a citizen should, without submitting to any test or paying any penalty, be permitted to refuse to do anything that seriously violates his conscience.

Any such solution is not satisfactory because, as I have already said, it makes it impossible to distinguish between conscience and self-seeking. Nor is that the only reason. Some might quite sincerely feel that it is wicked to support with taxes a government that permits the sale of tobacco and alcohol, or even one that permits the teaching of the theory of evolution. Accept such reasoning as this for not paying taxes, and the number of members in fundamentalist churches as well as the number of supporters of the Prohibition Party would increase at an alarming rate.

Now that I have solved, more or less to my own satisfaction, the problem of justice for the conscientious objector, I would like to return to the large, inclusive subject of permissiveness in general. Although permissive education for children is an old story and its pros and cons much debated, less consideration seems to me to have been given to what ought to be called the Permissive Society—for adults, as well as for children.

Some well-known sociologists and psychologists have given answers as extreme as those of the no longer fashionable educators who insisted that if a child wanted to saw off the legs of the piano or build a fire under the dining-room table, he ought not be interfered with. Brock Chisholm, for instance, goes so far as to suggest that the very concept of right and wrong is so poisonous that it is responsible for war and, presumably, that if no one was ever told that he had acted wrongly, universal peace would reign. "The only lowest common denominator of all civilization," he wrote, "and the only psychological force capable of producing these perversions [war and the tendency to defend one's own possessions when others have more need of them] is morality, the concept of right and wrong."

Mr. Chisholm's argument is easily reduced to the following dubious syllogism: "All societies have moral codes; all societies exhibit selfish motives and aggressive tendencies; therefore moral codes are the cause of selfishness and aggression." He seems to forget that there is another "lowest common denominator of all civilizations." It is called human nature; it descends to us from a long line of animal ancestors; it is not yet, perhaps never will be, and perhaps never should be, completely purged of elements that make Mr. Chisholm's Utopia a nowhere and a never-will-be. He also overlooks the fact that you can't say, "It is wrong to cultivate ideas of right and wrong," without violating your own imperative. When he says that we oughtn't say "ought" he has just done what we oughtn't do.

Much more widely defended than Mr. Chisholm's abstract arguments are the concrete proposals of those social scientists who insist that we should guarantee to every individual, no matter what his conduct, freedom, security, and a good standard of living. Erich Fromm, for instance, has written, "Until now man's freedom to act has been limited by two factors: the use of force on the part of rulers (essentially their capacity to kill the dissenters); and, more important, the threat of starvation against all who are unwilling to accept the imposed conditions of work." The only way to assure all of us our freedom is, so he says, that now widely advocated panacea, the guaranteed annual wage which would be paid to everyone without regard

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to his conduct. "A guaranteed income . . . would also establish a principle deeply rooted in Western religious and humanistic tradition: man has a right to live regardless! This right to live—to have food, shelter, medical care, education, and so forth—is an intrinsic human right that cannot be restricted by any conditions, not even the one that the individual must be 'socially useful.' " Such a principle seems to me less "deeply rooted in the Western religious and humanistic tradition" than the assumption that man has obligations as well as rights and that failure to meet those obligations has the effect of limiting the rights. Christianity speaks of justice tempered by mercy but it does not usually abandon the whole idea of justice.

The choice one makes between Fromm's concept of the Western tradition and that less boundlessly permissive concept that I tend to accept depends in part at least upon what one assumes would be the consequences, psychological as well as practical, of accepting the one or the other. Presumably Chisholm and Fromm agree with what used to be called philosophical anarchy and its assumption that laws are the sole cause of crime so that men will tend to be "socially useful" just in proportion to the extent that nothing is required of them.

The fact remains that many necessary tasks are in themselves unrewarding. Would anyone perform them for any reason except the compulsion Fromm so much deplores? Would anyone undertake the collection of garbage if he were not paid for it or could find a more agreeable task? If no one would, then would the garbage accumulate until we were buried in it, or (what seems much more likely) would "necessity, the tyrant's plea," raise up a dictator who, sweeping the old permissive system aside, would substitute for it one in which slaves (literal, not merely wage) would do the job? My guess is that this last is exactly what would happen and also that economic compulsion is preferable to the boundless tyranny of a dictator.

One may cite history to suggest that when men are assured bread and circuses, then socially useful is not what they become. But the experiment has not been tried in modern times, and the question may still be open.

Nevertheless, when I made recently a brief tour through the Haight-Ashbury region in San Francisco where hippies in increasing numbers are exercising a human right to come as near as our society permits to freedom from moral imperatives and the obligation to be socially useful, the experience seemed to me to throw some light. The life lived there does not look to me like a good one, and the proposal of such thinkers as Chisholm and Fromm seems to be that all who wish to live thus should be guaranteed, not merely a minimum, but an adequate income.

Perhaps, as has been said, a society as productive as ours could support a very large number of hippies, but I am not sure that it would not rather rapidly cease to be so productive and sink into a condition like that of India today where an equally benign but nerveless acceptance of the universe is said to prevail. Haight Street suggests that Eliot may have been wrong and that the way a world ends is with both a bang and a whimper—the bang being the violence, private, revolutionary and international, now everywhere so prevalent; the whimper, the hippie's nervous "I love you, so please love me."

I believe that for men as well as for children the way one behaves should have something to do with the way one is treated. I believe, therefore, in the widest possible freedom of choice but not that choices should have no consequences. These, I suppose, are essentially moral convictions, and moral convictions, as Mr. Chisholm has demonstrated to his own satisfaction, are the root of all evil.

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The Problem of Tax Loopholes
(Or: My Eighteen Years in a Quandary)

PAUL H. DOUGLAS

BY THE SUMMER of 1950, the attack by the North Koreans upon South Korea had plunged us into a full-scale Asiatic war. North Korea was being egged on and equipped by Red China and Russia, and the war was another effort by the Communist bloc to take over additional territory.

President Truman and the United Nations rose to the occasion and resisted this aggression, and it became necessary to raise large additional sums of money, running into many billions of dollars.

As the new tax bills moved onto the floor of the Senate, Senator Hubert Humphrey and I became more aware of the injustices in the existing tax structure and of new abuses that were being added.

Although we were only freshmen, and were not members of the Finance Committee, we felt it our duty both to become better educated on tax matters and to work for a more just revenue system. We believed this was particularly necessary because thousands of young Americans were being killed and many more were being wounded, and we felt that here at home profiteering should be reduced to a minimum.

A tax seminar was therefore organized which was attended by some of the small liberal bloc of senators. We got public-spirited experts to coach us in these secret sessions and to conduct what was, in effect, a cram course. Then, with fast-beating hearts, we ventured out on the floor to do battle with the two shrewdest minds of the Senate, namely, Walter George and Eugene Millikin, both of whom had impressive reputations and an awe-inspir-

✪ PAUL H. DOUGLAS was United States Senator from Illinois for eighteen years. He serves now as chairman of the National Committee on Urban Problems.

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ing capacity for thunderous debate. We also had to face, on some issues, Tom Connally of Texas, who loved to lash his opponents with the bullwhip of his brutal sarcasm, and who treated dissenters as though they were pre-Civil War slaves in the cotton kingdom or rambunctious horses to be subdued by lash and spur. Tom still had traces of frontier populism, but he also had a deep hatred of northern liberal Democrats, which made us fair game.

For many days we fought on a variety of issues. It seemed an unequal struggle since George, Millikin and Connally not only had the votes, but also had many years' acquaintance with the intricacies of the tax code, and were equipped with a formidable bevy of tax experts at their elbows, while we had to stand alone.

We had to learn and learn fast, and to deal on our feet with a baffling series of arguments which in retrospect were sophistical, but which at the time to many were persuasive. The press galleries were unsympathetic and our fellow senators largely hostile.

We had a rough time, but the longer the discussion went on the more convinced I became that the tax code was, in fact, permeated with favors to particular groups and individuals, and that it violated what seemed to be an elemental principle of equity, namely, that people with approximately equal net incomes should pay approximately equal taxes. Despite all the battering we received, and the loss of prestige that we suffered, both Senator Humphrey and I felt that the correctness of our positions had been maintained under fire.

So apparently did some of the experts, because there shortly appeared able articles by two eminent lawyers, namely, William L. Carey, of Northwestern and Columbia, and Stanley Surrey, then of Harvard University, that echoed our criticisms. The dean of tax lawyers, the late Randolph Paul, in public testimony also stressed many of the points we had tried to advance.

In 1955, I became chairman of the Joint Economic Committee, and with the able staff assistance of Dr. Norman Ture the Committee began to assemble evidence and take skilled testimony on many of the inequities that we had spotted. In the same year, after a long struggle, and largely because of the hammering of the columnist, Doris Fleeson, I was finally placed on the Senate Fi-

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nance Committee where I served for the next eleven years until my defeat for a fourth term in 1966.

On the Finance Committee I saw the formation of tax policy at first hand and took part in the intimate discussions that attended the writing and revision of our tax laws. I continued to urge most of the reforms that Senator Humphrey and I had advocated in 1950 and 1951 and, in addition, discovered new abuses that I thought needed to be corrected. After a little while, I was joined by Senator Albert Gore of Tennessee, who proved to be a strong and public-spirited colleague.

It was a tough decade. On major issues where enormous sums were at stake, we were almost always defeated, whether in committee or on the floor. But in the process we gained minor changes that reduced some of the specific injustices, so that we were never completely discouraged or frustrated.

There were two general sets of facts that convinced me that there were great abuses within our federal tax system.

The first was that only about half of the total personal income in the country was subject to taxation, while the other half completely escaped being levied on. The basic exemption of $600 a person accounted for only a fraction of this latter amount. The remainder was income that most people believed was taxable, but that was exempted in reality by a series of devices.

Then we discovered and got the Treasury to confirm that in every year there were a considerable number of persons with annual incomes of over $500,000 who paid no taxes at all. As we gathered evidence we found this number would never fall below twenty-five and sometimes went above thirty. We also found an even greater number with huge incomes who paid less than 10 or 15 percent.

We found that the averages paid by the groups with incomes above $50,000 was only a fraction of the amount they were presumed to pay, and that the uppermost group with incomes over $250,000, who according to the schedules were presumed to pay nearly 90 percent, actually paid on the average only 25 percent or slightly less. The "effective" rate was therefore far less than the nominal rate.

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All this, plus the evidence on specific "loopholes" or "truckholes" that enabled large quantities of income to slip through the tax net, still further convinced Senator Gore and me that we should expose these abuses and seek to cure them. We continued to be helped by public-spirited experts, who gave us surreptitious information, sometimes at real risk to themselves, and in particular by the ability of my former assistant, Mr. Philip Stern, who, building on some of our work and adding much of his own, produced his brilliant and witty book, *The Great Treasury Raid* (New York, 1964), which is still the classic in this field.

Out of this experience of nearly two decades I have distilled certain facts and conclusions. They show that our tax system is riddled with injustices that violate the simple principle, upon which I would think that all could agree, that people with equal net incomes should pay equal or approximately equal taxes. Whether we believe in progressive, regressive or proportional taxation, can we not all agree on this elementary principle of horizontal justice?

But this experience of nearly two decades and our relative lack of success also plunged me ever more deeply in a quandary.

When the so-called Ruml plan for withholding a basic percentage of the federal income tax from wages and salaries was adopted by Congress, it did not apply the withholding principle to interest and dividends. Such income was, on the contrary, to be reported by the recipient and the taxes were to be paid by him.

The Economic Committee hearings that I held in 1955 showed that while virtually all of the wages and salaries were reported, there were a big volume of interest and an appreciable portion of dividends that were not. It became possible to estimate the size of this gap from the reports published by the Securities and Exchange Commission and by the Treasury. Our little liberal group in the Senate, therefore, began to advocate applying the withholding principle, or what the British term "payment at the source" to dividends and interest so that ownership would not receive any more favored treatment than employment.

In 1962, under President Kennedy and Secretary Dillon, the

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Administration adopted this provision, and the Office of Tax Analysis under Donald Lubig was most helpful in the preparation of evidence and in working out simple plans for collection. It was clear that in 1959 about a billion dollars in dividends and three billion dollars in interest were not reported, with a consequent annual loss in taxes of between $900 million and $1 billion. These unreported sums amounted to 8 percent of all dividends and 34 percent of all interest. The proportion of wages and salaries not reported in 1959 came, on the other hand, to only 3 percent. This showed the greater efficiency of the withholding method.

The Administration tax bill for 1962, therefore, contained a provision for the automatic deduction and transmission to the Treasury of 20 percent from the total sums credited to dividends and interest without specifying the individuals or their amounts, and then for the filing of claims for any excess to be made periodically by the recipients. The plan was simple and just, and was adopted by the House Ways and Means Committee and by the House itself. Senator Gore and I prepared to support it in the Senate Finance Committee and, if necessary, on the floor of the Senate itself.

We had heard rumblings of opposition, but I must admit we were not prepared for the storm that followed. Suddenly, from all over the country, but especially from Illinois, thousands of protests poured into my office. By the end of a month, I had received over sixty-five thousand such letters and other senators had received about as many. Inquiry proved that these had been stimulated by the building and loan associations, whose main national body had launched the campaign from Chicago. The banks also helped in the letter-writing blitz.

These letters showed an extraordinary misconception of the tax. A large proportion hotly attacked the requirement for withholding as the imposition of a completely new and additional tax. They apparently thought that interest either was not income or was so sacred that it should not be taxed. This very fact was in itself eloquent proof of the widespread evasion or avoidance of the tax. It was in vain that in my initial answer I pointed out to these protesters that this was not a new tax but merely a better means of

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collecting an existing tax that had been widely evaded and avoided, and that their confusion was indeed ample proof of an existing failure to report.

Another widely prevalent misconception was that the tax was a levy amounting to a 20 percent annual assessment on the total capital that a person owned. It was consequently attacked as part of a communist scheme to confiscate all capital. It was, of course, instead a tax on income, not on capital. Thus on $1,000 of holdings that paid 4 percent, the 20 percent tax would be levied on the $40 of interest and not on the principal of $1,000.

I then prepared a brief article summarizing the way in which the income tax had been avoided and evaded, and how simple the proposal was—namely, to withhold one-fifth of all payments of dividends and interest and send the totals to the Treasury. In the event of overwithholding, the individuals would then be able to file quarterly requests for refunds. I pointed out to all my correspondents that the basic income tax on wages and salaries had been similarly withheld for twenty years with only annual refunds and asked why interest and dividends should be given such especially favored treatment.

It was all in vain. No one was convinced. The tide of angry letters continued to pour in. Virtually every senator received thousands, and many counted their letters in the tens of thousands.

The result was inevitable. By a vote of eleven to five, the withholding provision was stricken from the bill in the Finance Committee. Then, on the floor of the Senate, when I moved to restore the clause, I was overwhelmingly defeated and mustered only twenty votes.

Here we were deserted by the Administration, which evidently decided that the struggle was useless. During the entire battle, the academic profession of economists was all but silent, so that Senator Gore and I felt that we had been allowed to die on an economic Berlin Wall without a hand ever being raised to help.

But as sometimes happens, to deaden the impact of our argument, and perhaps to quiet the consciences of our opponents, it was provided that institutions should report to the Internal Revenue Bureau the names and addresses of all those to whom they paid dividends and interest as well as the amounts so paid to each.

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Then at the regional computer centers these amounts were to be combined and the total tax due from each person was to be computed and compared with that which had been paid.

This is being done. It requires far more detailed reports from the savings institutions than the simple reporting requirements of our proposal. It will collect less money because the burden of collection from the individuals is thrown back upon the Bureau of Internal Revenue. But it does lead to somewhat more careful reporting by the recipients and, according to the Treasury, it has increased collections by about $250 million a year. Thus far we have, therefore, saved the taxpayers about a billion dollars. Perhaps in time, in order to avoid the red tape that has been heaped upon them, the savings institutions may lessen their opposition and consent to withholding at the source. If they do, at least around $750 million more will be saved each year for the American people. Even now the savings will probably be greater.

What then were the real reasons for this apparently illogical opposition? I think they were the following: A very large proportion of those who had savings accounts in the banks and shares in the building and loan institutions never drew out in cash the annual interest that accumulated on their accounts but allowed it to be added automatically to their principal. Many of these savers were sufficiently naïve not to realize fully that this increase in their capital holdings came from income. They seemed to think it came from spontaneous generation. The banks and building and loan associations, of course, knew what was happening, but they also realized that a large share of the growth in their savings deposits was due to the accumulation of compound interest, and they did not want to have this increment of growth diminished by the amount of the tax. They had the use of the funds of which the federal government was deprived, and they wanted to hold on to them.

I left this battle with a wry taste in my mouth, but also with the realization that it could have been worse and that to save $250 million a year for the public might not have been so bad an achievement in so imperfect a world.

The biggest and longest battle was, however, over the worst

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abuse of all, namely the 27½ percent depletion allowance on gas and oil. Billions of dollars are at stake here, and a little explanation of the present tax procedures in the oil industry is appropriate. The oil industry already had certain tax favors that I did not question. Of course, the deduction of operating costs from gross revenue is perfectly proper. Nor did I question the propriety of charging off the costs of the unsuccessful drillings or "dry holes" from the revenues obtained from the successful drillings when these are conducted by the same enterprise. I did not raise any objection to granting the industry the right to charge off in the first year all the "intangible" drilling and development costs. These so-called developmental costs comprise from 75 to 90 percent of the total exploratory and drilling costs and were granted the fastest of all rates of accelerated depreciation—namely, a complete write-off in the initial year. Men in the industry who were secretly in favor of my stand (and there are a few) have repeatedly assured me that this is an even more important special favor than the depletion allowance itself. But this issue was complicated since these costs could always be alleged to be operating costs and hence deductible dollar for dollar from the immediate income realized from the oil and gas.

So I determined to concentrate on the 27½ percent depletion allowance, which Hubert Humphrey and I had originally attacked in 1951 and 1952. This exempted from taxation 27½ percent of all gross income in the oil and gas industry up to 50 percent of net income, and it did this without any limitation as to the length of time for which this exemption was to continue or the ratio of the tax rebate to the original investment.

This provision had been inserted in our tax laws during the 1920's when the corporation income tax was only 14 percent of net profits, and when the total amount of the tax privilege thus conferred was not overwhelming, say, about 7 percent of the profits. But it continued to be retained after the corporate tax had risen to 52 percent and when the depletion allowance could and commonly did cut in half the taxes paid by this rich industry. Moreover, it had spawned a series of similar exemptions: sulfur had been granted a 23 percent exemption, and a number of minerals, including coal, had been allowed a 15 percent depletion grant.

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We had seen Tom Connally broaden this exemption by a 5 percent rate on clam and oyster shells, as well as on sand and gravel—although there was no danger of "dry holes" or unsuccessful explorations in these cases! Every mineral had come to be included.

We ultimately got the Treasury to tell us how much these exemptions amounted to, and their report was that in the late fifties and early sixties the total came to about $3½ billion annually with the Treasury losing about $1½ billion. Today it is undoubtedly much more.

Long before this, however, I had prepared a counterproposal which I tried out in committee and on the floor nearly every year.

This was to introduce a sliding scale allowance that would amount to granting the existing 27½ percent on the first million dollars of annual gross income but decreasing this to 21¼ percent on gross incomes of between one and five million dollars and then having it fall to 15 percent on all incomes over five million dollars. This would have yielded in the earlier years from $350 to $400 million a year in revenue, while in later years the gain would have been around $500 million annually. Today it would probably be still more.

I justified this differential between small and large operators on the ground that the smaller operators were not able to distribute their risks to the same degree as the big operators and companies. Their fewer drillings exposed them, therefore, to higher risks.

I must confess, however, that I also hoped that this compromise would help to split off the small operators from the huge companies and make it more possible to pass the measure. In this, I was disappointed. Although there were only two or three concerns in Illinois that had gross receipts in excess of a million dollars, nearly all of the small operators lined up behind the big companies and in bitter opposition to me. They were the dominant economic interest in one congressional district covering the southeastern section of the state. Most of them insisted that I was proposing to cut their allowance to 15 percent, although this was, of course, not the case. No explanation was effective, although finally the more knowledgeable would privately admit that while they understood that they would not be hurt, for the sake of industry solidarity they must

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oppose the Douglas amendment and me personally. Despite all their efforts and the oil money that came into the state in the 1954 and 1960 election campaigns, I had been able to beat off their attacks, and had even carried the oil district. Their opposition continued, however, and in the Senate I had no such luck.

Despite help from Senator Albert Gore and an honorable conservative, Senator John Williams of Delaware, we were periodically snowed under on the Finance Committee. Indeed, I sometimes suspected that the major qualification for most aspirants for membership on the Finance Committee was a secret pledge or agreement to defend the depletion allowance against all attacks. I suspected, also, that campaign funds reinforced these pledges.

Once again, we received little or no support from the Administration, which evidently thought the depletion allowance to be "too hot to handle." And, once again, the economics profession was largely silent, except for a few scattered voices that correctly pointed out that the tax favors led to overinvestment in the industry, thus causing the average return, exclusive of tax favors, on the American investment to fall somewhat below the general average for all industry.

But there was little or no criticism from the economists of the morality of the tax advantage that helped a number of the fabulously wealthy to escape from paying any taxes whatsoever and helped many others to pay only nominal sums. There seemed to be no resentment among businesses that oil and gas companies only paid one-third to one-half the rate of taxation upon net profits paid by the main mass of American corporations. The prevailing sentiment seemed instead to be gratification that one group, at least, had been able to outwit the government and the reformers. Despite the fact that we wanted to lower the general tax rate once we had obtained greater uniformity in our tax system, and constantly stressed this point, we were about as popular among business executives as the revenue agents used to be among the mountaineers of Appalachia when they tried to put down "moonshining."

We gained a slight flicker of interest from among a few of the independents when we pointed out that the big oil companies that had concessions in Venezuela and the Persian Gulf countries were able to escape virtually all taxation by (1) successfully claiming the

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depletion allowance on their foreign oil (despite the fact that subsurface deposits, under Roman and national law, are the property of the state) and (2) counting as "taxes" the royalties that they paid for the extraction abroad of government-owned oil. In this way the 50 and later 75 percent payments for the extraction of the oil were not counted as an operating expense, but rather as a tax to be deducted dollar for dollar from the tax that otherwise would be paid to the United States government.

Despite all the propaganda and the pressures, there was a heroic group of senators who stood firm. Once we got as many as thirty-eight votes, but later we slumped to twenty. Calling for a roll-call vote was in a sense like marching brave troops into the valley of political death and reducing the number of public-spirited soldiers. Therefore, toward the end of the long bitter struggle, I would agree to a voice, rather than a roll-call, vote in order to shield our secret supporters. I was willing, as were my comrades, Senator William Proxmire and Senator Gore, to be marked for destruction in a cause that we believed to be in the public interest, but we did not want to drag down others to political disaster and reenact the role of Lord Raglan who sent the noble six hundred to death at Balaklava in the Crimean War.

Some of us have been effectively disposed of; more probably will be; but the issue remains. And as one who still believes (perhaps foolishly) that in a democracy no issue is settled until it is settled right, and that in the long run an educated public opinion will prevail, I remain guardedly hopeful. I am grateful to Senators Proxmire and Gore, as we all should be, for keeping the issue alive, and I pray that they may succeed where others of us have failed.

The third great abuse lies in the field of the capital gains tax. Here the profits realized from the sale of a capital asset that has been held for longer than six months are taxed, when sold, at only one-half the income tax rate, but in no case at more than 25 percent. Moreover, the amounts not taxed are not counted as "taxable income," and hence do not appear in the statistics issued by the Treasury Department. Like the murdered victims of the criminal syndicate, they, with the oil and mineral depletion allowances, are given an anonymous burial so that even the buried bodies disappear.

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Philip Stern estimated in 1962 that this favored treatment shrunk the tax base by $6 billion a year and cost the Treasury $2.4 billion annually. But this is only the beginning. An even greater leakage occurs when property is bequeathed. Let us take the case of a father who buys property for $100,000 during his lifetime, which by the time of his death is worth $1 million, or $900,000 more. His son inherits the estate and a year later sells this same property for $1,100,000. He will pay a capital gains tax only on the $100,000 that has accrued during his ownership, while the $900,000 gain inherited from his father not only will go tax free but will be unrecorded. Stern estimates that from $12 to $13 billion thus escape taxation every year and that the Treasury annually loses an approximate added $2.9 billion.

It was such injustices in the capital gains system (and not such incidental absurdities as giving capital gains treatment to the raising of cattle but not to chickens and turkeys) that most outraged me.

To deal with the untaxed capital gains during a testator's lifetime, I proposed collection at the time of ultimate sale, but, of course, with a deduction or tax credit given for all inheritance taxes paid in the meantime on the property. In other words, if a total inheritance tax of $50,000 had been levied on this property, this would be deducted dollar for dollar from the tax ultimately realized on the capital gains.

And if it be objected that to tax capital gains in years of bunched income would be inequitable, I constantly made it clear that I would agree to lengthen this period to any proper degree. This would reduce the total of the super-taxes that would be paid. But such conciliatory motions were overwhelmingly defeated in committee and on the floor. At first the Kennedy Administration supported the idea of taxing the inherited capital gains, but this support faded as we approached the hour of decision, while once again the voices of the economists were for the most part mute.

The treatment of stock options was, and is, an especially antisocial use of the capital gains principle.

It had been the custom of many corporations to give to a chosen group of executives the right to buy added quantities of stock, and for gains realized upon this to be taxed at capital gains and not at

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income tax rates. Very commonly this stock could be purchased at less than the market rate, thus extending the practice of the "preferred lists" that had been the common custom during the 1920's of such financial giants as the Morgan firm and Samuel Insull. If the stock fell while the option was being held, then the beneficiary was commonly freed from his option.

The plan, by creating additional claimants for the net earnings of the companies, like the preferred lists, obviously diluted the equities of the existing stockholders.

The defense given for the stock options was, of course, that they would increase the incentive of management to make profits for the companies by increasing the amount of tax-free income that they would receive. It had a side effect of concentrating executive attention upon the price of the stock rather than treating this, as I believe should be done, as merely the by-product of an efficiently managed company. It could be argued that from the companies' standpoint it would be better to make these added payments in the form of cash bonuses or percentages of the net profits, rather than from profits from the sale of added shares of stock. But this would have meant that the added income would have been taxed at ordinary, rather than at capital gains, rates. In essence the stock option plan permitted executives to become wealthier than would otherwise have been possible, and to do so in a shorter period of time. It was touted as a means of helping young executives to climb the economic ladder more rapidly, although in practice the major rewards went to those in the later afternoon of their business careers. Often as members of the boards of directors, they voted themselves these large tax-free bonuses.

Due to the valiant efforts of Senator Gore, we succeeded in ending some of the worst abuses of the stock option plans. How much we have saved by these modifications is still unknown, but I estimate that while the gains are real they are still minor.

Another persistent loophole is the exemption from federal taxation of the interest on the bonds of state and local governments. This exemption was first enacted because of the fear that such a tax would be held unconstitutional by the courts, and also by a desire to make the financing of capital improvements easier for the

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state and local governments. That it has helped in the latter direction is shown by the fact that while high grade municipals are still much less safe than federal issues, their yield in March of 1967 was a full percentage point below the latter, namely, 3½ instead of 4½ percent. Without this tax advantage, the municipalities would probably have had to pay at least 4¾ percent interest and possibly 5 percent in order to float their loans. Since the total outstanding bonds issued by the state and local governments amount to approximately $100 billion, the total in interest that is saved for these bodies probably comes to somewhere around $1¼ to $1½ billion a year.

Such tax-free issues, however, become tax havens or sanctuaries for men and women in the upper income and tax brackets. Thus when Mrs. Horace Dodge, Sr., inherited $56 million from the estate of her husband, she immediately invested all of it in state and municipal bonds and thereby removed the entire income from her fortune from federal taxation. This is a particularly attractive tax route for those in the upper income tax brackets who do not wish to play an active role in the business world. If only the existing income from these bond issues were taxed, federal receipts would be at least 50 percent on the $3½ billion that is now immune from federal taxation. This would amount to $1¾ billion. If the federal government were to pay in outright subsidy to the local governments to compensate for these lost tax benefits, this would still net at least a half billion dollars a year for the federal government. It might indeed net more since the interest rate, and hence the total interest payments on state and municipals, would rise. Assuming that the total interest could increase to $4½ billion, at an average tax rate of 50 percent, this could net $2¼ billion or a billion dollars more than the compensating subsidy. Unless some such action is taken, the amount of lost income will probably increase as retired men and women of wealth seek these privileged sanctuaries.

A particularly bad form of this tax subsidy to localities occurs when local and state bonds are floated to finance the construction costs of runaway factories from other parts of the country. In many Southern states this is a common practice, and it serves to draw employment away from the North and the Midwest. It creates un-

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employment in these sections of the country and makes it harder for the workmen up North to obtain wage increases. Both of these factors, then, depress the tax base in these areas and decrease the ability of those who hire them to pay taxes, at the very time that they create higher local relief and welfare costs.

On top of all this, the taxpayers of the North and West have to pay higher federal income taxes or else short-change the general welfare because of this subsidy to their southern competitors. They in effect are being asked to help finance their own economic destruction.

Thus far the massed political power of the South has been sufficiently great as to prevent the closing of even this relatively tiny loophole. In self-defense, Northern and Western states are beginning to extend similar privileges, and the evil is spreading.

The depreciation allowances on buildings are computed on the money cost of the property to the last purchaser and not on the book value of the physical structure of the building itself. Thus if a man constructs an office building at a cost of $5 million, he can take accelerated depreciation for several years and use this as a credit against the net income from that property, or any other property that he may own. At 5 percent a year, he would thus get a credit of $250,000. If his net income from the building was $200,000, this would mean that he would pay no taxes and would have an additional credit, to be carried over, of $50,000. This could go on for at least five years, when the accelerated depreciation amounting to approximately $1.7 million would have to be greatly reduced. But office buildings enhance somewhat in value during the first years of occupancy, and it would be quite possible to sell the property for $5 million or more instead of the depreciated book value of approximately $3,300,000. The original owner would pay a capital gains tax only on the $1.7 million profit made from selling at above book value, although he had used his depreciation allowance to reduce his higher regular income tax rate.

The newcomer could, however, start taking his double depreciation on his $5 million purchase price instead of on the $3.3 million of book value. This, as a matter of fact, would be an important reason why he would pay the full $5 million.

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After a few years a third comer might even be willing to pay $5 million, although the $3.4 million taken for depreciation might have left but $1.6 million of the original cost of $5 million.

This process could be kept up almost interminably, with the ultimate total amounts deducted for depreciation far exceeding the original cost. This practice also puts a premium upon a frequent change of ownership, which is especially injurious in the case of tenements. We would save many hundreds of millions of dollars of taxes if depreciation were to be computed upon the book value of the building rather than upon the purchase price paid, and so that the total taken could not exceed the original cost or possibly the original cost plus replacements. It is true that double depreciation in the early years was eliminated for housing in the 1964 act, but the so-called "sum of the years" method gives substantially the same result, and the earlier provision has since been restored. Since all this is computed on the money cost of the building to the present owner, this is a stimulus to frequent changes of ownership. And this in turn leads to added neglect.

The depreciation allowance is, moreover, divorced from the performance of any major replacements or repairs. It would be better if the average depreciation rate were to be lowered from 2½ to 2 percent or less, thus assuming a life of fifty or more years, rather than forty, for the structure, and then to provide additional allowances for those major repairs and replacements to the degree that they are made subject to a maximum allowance in any one year or over a span of years. This would be a mighty stimulus for owners to keep houses in repair and would lessen the tendency for them to deteriorate.

There are many other quirks and loopholes in the taxation of commercial real estate that result in great losses of tax revenue, among them the "sell and lease back" arrangement. Here any gains will be taxed later only at capital gains rather than at income tax rates, while the rent payments can be deducted from gross profits as an operating cost. Time forbids going into all these complexities. But as the publications of various tax services demonstrate, they are complex and, for those who practice them, lucrative.

In 1962, the Treasury presented a mass of evidence showing ex-

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cessive tax-deduction claims for travel and for entertainment. The instances presented were at once ludicrous and also, in a sense, nauseating. We were able to tighten the rules somewhat, most notably in limiting travel expenses (exclusive of actual transportation) to twice the amount allowed government employees, and at a present figure of $32.00 a day. We also restricted the deductibility of business presents to $25.00 from one person to another. But the major expenses for entertainment have been largely legalized, and the evils of an expense-account civilization are still largely unchecked.

During our consideration of one of the major tax bills a seemingly innocent provision was inserted that later turned out to be a Trojan horse. This was to exempt from taxation all future "charitable" contributions if in eight of the past ten years 90 percent of the *taxable* income had either been given to charity or paid in taxes. There were two booby traps carefully concealed within this seemingly public-spirited provision that was represented as an encouragement to private charity. I confess I was fooled by them. The first is that it is only 90 percent of the *taxable* income that is counted, and not 90 percent of the real income. By exempting capital gains income and "depletion income," which is not taxed, the proportion of income actually given away can be, and frequently is, only a small fraction of the actual real income. It is therefore especially popular among the oil barons of the Southwest.

The second joker is that by creating "personal foundations" the donor can retain control of those properties that he is apparently giving away and have the income spent in accordance with his wishes and frequently to his profit.

Congressman Wright Patman has unearthed many of the abuses perpetrated by these "foundations." And it is significant that the unlimited charitable deduction ranks alongside the depletion allowance, the fast write-off of drilling and developmental costs, and the capital gains privileges as an important reason why so many men with huge incomes pay small taxes, or none at all.

Men who own their homes are not taxed on the imputed income afforded by that ownership, while the renter receives no

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credit for the amount that he pays for shelter. A man with a $10,000 salary who lives in a $20,000 house that he owns, and for which, if he did not own it, he would have to pay another person $2,000 a year rent, really has the approximate equivalent of a $12,000 income, but he only pays on $10,000. (For convenience' sake, I am disregarding local property taxes and maintenance costs. These do decrease the tax advantage of the home owner.) His neighbor across the street who also has a salary of $10,000, but who pays $2,000 rent, is taxed on the *full* $10,000. If we were to preserve uniformity, either the first man's income should be reckoned at $12,000, as was once true in England, or his neighbor should be rated at $8,000. But to adopt this latter method would be to provide that amounts paid in rent should not be taxed as income. This exemption of rent hardly seems equitable.

But, even if justifiable, the inclusion of imputed rent in taxable income hardly seems possible in the near future.

Neither does changing the rule that a husband and wife may split their income for tax purposes. This allows taxation at a lower average rate than if the major share of the income were credited to the financial head of the family, who actually received it. While it does not cost a man and wife twice as much to live as it does a single man, it commonly does cost them more. And while the wife of a well-to-do man costs far more than the $600 of personal exemption that is allowed, nevertheless a distinct tax favor is given to the married men, as it is to homeowners. This tax advantage increases as one moves into higher and higher tax brackets, so that matrimony is relatively more blessed financially for the millionaire than for the modest members of the middle and lower economic classes. I cannot believe that the wife of a wealthy man is correspondingly so much better and more socially valuable than the wives of the financially humble.

I began my senatorial career in a quandary, and when I left, the quandary was even bigger than when I started. It was this: Can and will the people under the best system of government in the world, and with an able and high-minded Congress, ever be able to protect the public interest in tax matters and enforce equal justice for all?

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I must admit that the eighteen years have, on the surface, been disillusioning. We have made a few improvements during that time and may have saved a billion dollars or more a year, but the big loopholes and truckholes remain. Indeed, new ones have been opened, sometimes over our opposition and sometimes, as I have pointed out, without our knowledge. I daresay that there may be still other financial time bombs, presumably concealed in innocent-sounding verbiage, which will turn out to free still more income from taxation. The summing up that Philip Stern gave in his *The Great Treasury Raid* is substantially true today.

> For a raid of its magnitude, the time (high noon) and setting (the United States Treasury, a stone's throw from the White House) showed a breath-taking boldness of design and planning. From out of nowhere, it seemed, they appeared—old people and young, rich and poor, an oil millionaire here, a factory worker there, a real estate tycoon, a working mother, several well-known movie stars, some corporation presidents, even the chairman of a powerful Congressional committee. It was a mixed lot, all right, that converged on the Treasury Building that high noon. Into the building they strolled, gloriously nonchalant. No one stopped them; not a guard looked up to question them. Quickly and quietly they found their way to the vaults; opened them noiselessly with the special passkeys each had brought with him. Like clockwork, with split-second timing, each went to his appointed spot, picked up a bag and walked out as calmly as he had entered. At the exits the guards sat motionless. At precisely 12:04 it was all over. Each of the "visitors" had vanished into thin air.
>
> *So had forty billion dollars from the United States Treasury.*

Despite all our efforts, the brutal fact must be admitted. We have largely failed.

Is the fault then in the structure of our economic life, "in our stars," so to speak, or in ourselves, that so little progress has been made?

It used to be said by some that the trouble with democracy is that the ablest and best educated men and women in the country do not take part in political affairs, but that if they would only interest themselves more in public matters they would set matters right.

But it has been the extremely able who have inserted these loopholes in the tax laws. The loopholes and even more, the

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truckholes, are defended against elimination or lessening by other extremely able men. The large hearing room of the Finance Committee seats a hundred and fifty persons. When we considered a tax bill, the room was filled with prosperous lawyers, graduates of great universities and of the top ranking law schools, whom Assistant Secretary of the Treasury Stanley Surrey once referred to in a burst of admiration as "the best minds in the country," all working to hold what they and their clients had and to enlarge it.

One major trouble with our tax system is, therefore, precisely this: that these "best minds" in the country have largely worked to make it what it is. Not more than one out of every hundred citizens actively working on a tax bill is trying to represent the general interest. And in the halls outside the hearing rooms the lobbyists are as thick as flies, while the publicity men and noisemakers are busily at work in Washington and elsewhere. In the halls of academe, erudite professors train their students in the intricacies of the tax code so that their students may succeed in the private practice of law by helping wealthy clients avoid taxes and thus beat the government of the people.

All this raises the question whether this is a fundamental weakness of our democratic system, namely, that the producing and possessing interests are compact, powerful and well-organized, while the consuming and nonpossessing classes are busy with other things, and their interests diffused; and that while the people are numerically more numerous, they are collectively weak, ignorant and unorganized. Does it follow that in a conflict between these two groups it is almost invariably the more powerful that wins?

As I watched the struggle and indeed took part in it for nearly two decades, I was struck with the similarity between it and the way the Spaniards were able to take over Mexico, Peru, and indeed all of Latin America, as narrated by William H. Prescott in his two classic histories, the *Conquest of Mexico* and the *Conquest of Peru.*

There were about thirteen million Indians in Mexico whereas there were only about five hundred Spaniards under Cortes. But the Spaniards wore armor, and they had gunpowder and powerful harquebuses, while the Indians were largely unarmed and unprotected. The Spaniards had horses, which gave them mobility,

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which the Indians did not have. They were, moreover, under tight discipline and moved as one, whereas the Indians were torn by internal dissension and overawed by the proud and arrogant newcomers.

So it sometimes seemed to me in these tax battles. A particular measure would mean millions to a few, but only a few cents to each of the two hundred million Americans. It was hard for the individual citizen to become informed. Even if he knew what was at stake, he was busy earning a living for his family and could not interrupt his work to defend his infinitesimal interest. Leisure, moreover, has its proper claims as well. So only a minute fraction can enlist in the common cause, and they can only do so at great risk to themselves. This in itself is a preventive to action.

James Madison saw this danger to our democracy at the very founding of our Republic and tried to develop an answer in the tenth essay of the *Federalist*. He thought he had found a partial answer to the peril in the mutual checks and balances that the divergent producing interests, called into being by a national market, would exercise upon each other.

This form of countervailing power is helpful in many fields. But I did not find it to be an adequate protection for the consumers or the small taxpayers. For producers seldom think of consumers, while those with big potential tax bills are commonly not solicitous about the other taxpayers. There is, moreover, a kind of fellow feeling among the powerful that makes it bad form for one group to balk another in a matter in which they are not themselves directly concerned.

Fortunately, in the history of our Republic, there have generally been some politicians who, at great risk to themselves, have defended the general interest with energy and ability. Such were George Norris of Nebraska, the two Robert LaFollettes of Wisconsin, and more recently the beloved Herbert Lehman of New York. Such, I believe, are my friends, Albert Gore of Tennessee and Bill Proxmire of Wisconsin, who have specialized in these very matters. There are many others on the national, state and local levels. Generally, these men in the past were ultimately defeated, but they lasted long enough to make an impression on their times and to win important victories. Their lives and the respect

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that is later accorded to them after they die is proof that there is a deep, if unexpressed, hunger, on the part of the inarticulate millions, for just such defenders.

But political battles cannot be won by solo combat. The days of the knightly tournaments celebrated by Sir Walter Scott in his *Ivanhoe* are over. Modern political struggles, like modern wars, need mass support and an adequate organizing staff if they are to be successful. Where is this support coming from?

The industrial unions, and most conspicuously the United Automobile Workers, have shown the greatest awareness of this need and have, in general, exercised a concerned interest in what may be termed the general welfare. There are various public groups with circumscribed interests that, from time to time, are also helpful. But we would be in a much stronger position if the organization of consumers, now embryonic, were more of a reality than a hope.

When I entered public life, now nearly three decades ago, I assumed in my innocence that man's efforts at just and humane self-government constituted the highest form of secular activity, and that the state was a fitting instrumentality through which men could lead the good life. I had been proud of our national government and thought of it as a friend and not an enemy, and as something to be served and not exploited.

But it is obvious that this view is not held by a large and influential proportion of the population. As some of their frankest spokesmen have said, they seem to regard the national government as their enemy and as something malign to be hated.

I once heard an eminent public figure declare that it was a man's duty to pay the federal government as little as possible in the way of taxes. Everywhere one finds powerful groups moving in to extract special privileges from our society, and they always seem to be able to attract to their cause skilled lawyers, technical experts, economists, publicity men and public relations practitioners, who then use their brains and wiles to promote the fortunes of their employers. Meanwhile the main mass of the general public and even of the academic profession stand by as mere spectators and allow without protest the power juggernauts to conquer. They

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behave indeed like so many city spectators who watch crimes being committed without raising a hand to defend the victims or lifting their voices to call the police.

To me this was and is a sign of the disintegration of a society that has lost sight of its common purpose. But to others it is the smart thing to do.

This is what deepened my quandary.

The query is appropriate: where are the champions of the people? Where are the men, better and more effective than we who have tried and lost, coming from?

I do not know. But I am an optimist. I cannot believe that the people with all their weaknesses will allow the noble ship of democratic government to be taken over by these well-clad pirates with impeccable credentials. For if they do, there may ultimately be such disillusion with our form of government as to cause the people in frustration to abandon ship and to allow it to be taken over by a still worse group of tyrants, who will suppress our liberties and shut the gates of mercy on mankind.

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Belated Birthday Greetings for Wystan Auden at Sixty

DACHINE RAINER

Forgive my lateness.
You know, Wystan, how it is:
one fits the occasional poem in
between the chronic shopping list
(I remember one of yours that began with "gin"
but mysteriously resolved into hot soup).

I can't remember what (with basket in loosely jointed hand,
shuffling quickly in your easy sneakers
and with inward stare—you were thinking
of Goethe not stew) you carried home
from the Polish barons of New York's
First Avenue. Sausages probably, herbs and marrowbone.

You and I have swapped homes—and continents.
I have the less affluent but the better deal:
when we compare heel with uncivilized heel
that towers each, I own the greater iniquity mine.
The most tiresome thing about this country I feel
is that you live somewhere else.

I received your letter
which I should like to say
I kiss morning and night
(I at least think I ought).
You send love and love
is what you have for us

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not that absurd Freudian caution
barring love from concern,
removing concern from passion.

I don't like to worry about you barrel stomping
American undergrads (although I'm glad it's not me).
Anyway, you'll never know what effect you're having
in that affectless society on someone in English Three.

For how can one again read Othello without thinking of you
and your Christian hullabaloo about Iago
lusting after knowledge one is not meant to know?
Thanks: progress comes unstuck like old glue.

Jimmy Stern says you expect to live to eighty-two,
so happy, happy birthdays, Wystan:
master of versification,
(dear, furrowed, Icelandic fish,
ears like dewlaps, skillful February eyes)
journalist critic of an epoch, forgive me that I think
you too complexly hip for Valery's final simplification,
but Dryden, Pope and Byron have no patch on you.

Unlike you, I shall not live to eighty-two
(I was confident I'd die when Keats did
or in this hurried interval before Rilke's middle age)
but we'll meet in The Place (if I'm granted a place:
I've been less true to our muse than you).

Modesty aside, you *know* without cant
(although you're honestly but inexplicably shy)
you'll live forever. You're a cherished monument.

✪ DACHINE RAINER, poet, essayist and fiction writer, lives in London. Her poetry is included in W. H. Auden's *Book of Modern American Verse* and several other anthologies. She is working on a long study of Rebecca West's writing.

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Flowering Tree

MARGUERITE EDMONDS

Li soleus quien moi luist est mes deduis,
Et Dieus est mes conduis.
—Anonymous Chanson Pieuse, 13th century.

Christ dies eternally
God is my guide
who cherishes beside:
you, Lady, are the tree.

Sun shines in me
is my felicity.

Madonna, in your face
an image grows in grace:
Christ dies eternally
you blossom as the tree.

What do you ask?
My death, some task?

The bushes burn in Paradise
their flames are praise
candles lit always.

Love is eternity,
sun shines in me
is my felicity.

God is my guide
who cherishes beside:
you, Lady, are the tree.

✪ MARGUERITE EDMONDS lives near Beaconsfield, England. During the last three years she has contributed poems, articles and reviews to about a dozen periodicals; this is her first poem to be published in America.

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South Africa's New Look

A *Détente Cordiale?*

C. EDWARD CROWTHER

TO THOSE WHO READ THE SIGNS, Africa appears to be on the verge of yet another revolution. It would be a revolution with a difference, however—a quiet revolution, but decisive nevertheless.

The South African Prime Minister lunches in Cape Town with the black Premier of Lesotho; visiting black cabinet ministers are entertained in a fashionable Cape Town hotel; the green light for 1968 is given by Pretoria to South African nonwhite athletes to compete interracially in the Olympic Games.

Whether these are by calculation or in response to the pressure of outside events, all provide premiums for insurance overseas against the dangers of increasing political isolation and escalating sanctions. At the same time, some of the toughest apartheid legislation yet enacted seeks to close any remaining doors to integration. A ruthless policy of "back to the homelands" smashes urbanized African family life, and a new labor program sees conscripted colored youth "cadets" replacing expelled Africans from the industrialized areas of their heaviest concentration.

South Africa now is an enigma. Both her many foes and few friends in the world outside view her new look with considerable cynicism at worst and, at best, eager hope that the change may go deep enough to make the cost of public friendship less than political embarrassment. Such changes in her outlook as have occurred are minor. They are meticulously designed to leave intact apartheid, the political creed that has incurred the abhor-

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rence of most of the world. Yet almost any change denoting flexibility is better than the rigid immovability of a year ago. Any concession, however small, will remove some of the heat from one of the most potentially eruptive situations in the most steamingly explosive continent in the world. South Africa has become a trigger point of international tensions, and, at the same time, a convenient whipping boy for many of the world's less naked problems. A *détente* in Africa today cannot be seen merely as an uneasy cease-fire so far as South Africa is concerned. It could well prove to be the launching pad for considerable and far-reaching realignments throughout the African continent.

Ever since Harold Macmillan identified the turbulence in Africa as the winds of change, Dr. Hendrik Frensch Verwoerd, with all the fervor of his Calvinistic forebears, accepted his vocation to preserve South Africa from even so much as a draft. South Africa had her predestined role to play as the last real bastion of white Christian civilization in the continent of Africa. With the help of the God who had guided and guarded the voortrekkers of old, she would show to the world that however misunderstood, however rejected and vilified she may be and at whatever the cost, white supremacy would be maintained.

The watchdogs of the laager, trained to incredible and blind obedience by their keeper, Balthazar John Vorster, for long the Minister of Justice and Police, were ready and able to track down, retrieve and deliver anything with the scent of liberalism that might destroy the spirit of the volk. In the land of apartheid, in that beautiful, cruel land with a heart of gold and diamonds in the veld, any hint of change was an ill wind blowing the chill of death to the methodically legislated and enforced "South African way of life." But well-publicized change, designed for maximum impact overseas, there has been. The Nationalist hierarchy in South Africa, several jumps in realism ahead of its Verwoerd-doting Afrikaner majority, is in the agony of an urgent reappraisal of policy that has yet to be sold to the general public. However much sleight of hand may become necessary to please the folks back home, the events of 1967 so far point overwhelmingly to a genuine attempt to create a *détente* with Africa and the Western world. There has been much activity in the background.

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In March, 1965, the new Foreign Minister, Dr. Hildgard Muller, listed nine United Nations specialized agencies, five organizations of states in Africa and eighteen other international organizations of which South Africa remained a member. In other words, the foundations of the *détente* were inherited by Vorster. At the international level, attitudes have changed dramatically since 1964, the year of South Africa's withdrawal from several international organizations, including the Food and Agriculture Organization and the International Labor Organization. At international meetings, Western delegates have attempted to divert fire, directed against South Africa, from the Afro-Asian group by pointing out that the committees concerned were set up to deal with technical questions and that political matters must be referred to the United Nations. There is no doubt that Dr. Muller's attitudes are much more flexible than those of his predecessor, Eric Louw. At ministerial level, therefore, such flexibility can have much more opportunity for expression than Verwoerd would ever have permitted, since he was much more dominantly in control of the Nationalist Party itself than is Vorster. In an attempt to rejoin the family of nations in Africa, Dr. Muller, in an Assembly speech in January, 1967, made it clear that South Africa was prepared to give expert advice and assistance to other African states. He emphasized, however, that South Africa would not accept interference in her domestic affairs, but was prepared to help other states stand on their own feet and to work out their own salvation, as South Africa demanded the right to do herself. He stated that a permanent interdepartmental advisory committee had been set up, under the chairmanship of the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, for cooperation with such states as were dealing with South Africa. During 1966, eight South African missions had visited other African states to discuss various matters relating to technical cooperation. Other visits were to take place in the near future and reciprocal visits were paid to South Africa.

The importance of these examples of South Africa's increasing outreach to the rest of the continent cannot be exaggerated. South Africa still retains a degree of participation in African affairs that can provide the springboard for further involvement when existing changes have become consolidated into firm policy. The head of

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South Africa's Veterinary Services is chairman of an Interterritorial Advisory Committee for the control of foot and mouth disease on which, *inter alia,* Zambia, Malawi, Lesotho, Botswana and Swaziland are represented. A South African is the permanent secretary of the International Red Locust Control Service, members of which include South Africa, Tanzania, Kenya, Zambia, Uganda, Burundi, Ruanda, Malawi, Angola, Mozambique and the Congo, in addition to the ex-High Commission territories of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. South Africa has trade agreements with various African states and is constantly giving agricultural advice and training. Assistance has been given to various states in the development of mining, road and rail construction, air navigation aids and health services. Professors D. V. Cowan and D. P. H. Horwood and industrialist Anton Rupert have been appointed by Lesotho to assist and advise in the constitutional and developmental problems of that enclaved republic, while the plans for the new capital for Malawi are in the hands of a South African-based firm of consultants. South African businessmen are now free to expand into other African countries when welcomed by such states.

The seeds of the *détente* already sown in Africa by the Republic's very existence have survived all the storms that would have uprooted lesser ties, and are beginning inevitably to push their way to the surface. The world is taking notice of those decisions that are bringing into South Africa's own backyard the logical consequences of a *détente cordiale.* The real fascination for Africa watchers is not so much in the relatively minor events that have already occurred but in what might eventually develop from them.

Representatives of several African states, passing through Jan Smuts International Airport in Johannesburg, have been suitably entertained by the Department of Foreign Affairs. Two Zambian passport officers have been stationed temporarily in Johannesburg. Earlier in 1967, Chief Leabua Jonathan met Mr. Vorster to make specific requests for economic aid and technical assistance, and the Lesotho delegation was put up at the swanky Mount Nelson Hotel in Cape Town. The incredible spectacle of Vorster lunching with a black man was witnessed by a startled South Africa, to whom an interracial handshake is still a trauma. Yet all these things have happened.

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Last March, for good measure, a four-man multiracial delegation from Botswana was in South Africa for discussions with the Department of Foreign Affairs. A few days later, three African cabinet ministers from Malawi were given full protocol treatment in Cape Town, driven in a government car by a white chauffeur, taken to lunch by Dr. Muller and other South African cabinet ministers, accommodated at the Mount Nelson and afterward taken on a sightseeing tour. Following their visit, a trade agreement was signed that gives to Malawi, in certain respects, favored nation treatment. On leaving, the three visiting cabinet ministers expressed their delight at the way they were treated in South Africa.

Some idea of the change of mind rather than heart that has occurred is given by a comparison of Vorster's boorish treatment of Robert Kennedy in South Africa with the jovial courtesy he has shown to the ministers from Malawi.

In South West Africa, the "trespassers will be prosecuted" signs have been removed, at least for the visits of foreign ambassadors invited by Vorster to the hitherto forbidden police zone. At the same time, limited self-government has been offered to the Ovambos—an obvious sop to United Nations pressure, even in the face of its own confusion. Whether or not South Africa, in fact, has any jurisdiction to invite or to refuse anybody's presence in South West, or to give whatever is meant by limited independence to anyone in that territory, at this stage is beside the point. Mandate or no mandate, Vorster has made cooing noises, and it may well be that the United Nations will gratefully accept the chance to get off a very uncomfortable hook.

A convenient term to cover up the embarrassment of sweeping the issue under the mat could be *"détente."*

South Africa is a riddle. How is South Africa's new position vis-à-vis the continent of Africa to be interpreted? What lies behind the new flexibility in the hitherto granite-like policy of South Africa and its leaders? Policies for export only and for home consumption are markedly different, and this fact must be clearly noted. There is a temptation to attribute the changes to the success of external pressures.

Certainly there was nothing in the background of Balthazar John Vorster to suggest that he might respond to overseas opinion.

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Rather, his previous reaction had been to draw the ox wagons into a circle. How to win friends and influence people, until he became Premier, had never seemed to be Vorster's forte outside the narrow circle of extremist and Afrikaner "Nats." His record as Minister of Justice and Police communicated the "grand inquisitor of the laager" figure, ruthlessly pursuing justice geared to ideological ends. He vigorously defended the principle of imprisonment without trial when he sponsored the one-hundred-eighty-day trial-less detention legislation replacing the previous ninety-day term. His use of the banning order, in which a person's home serves as his prison for up to five years without a trial, took on almost religious justification in defense of real and imaginary threats to the volk. His arbitrary and iron-fisted banning without trial of twenty-one-year-old Ian Robertson, president of N.U.S.A.S., the national student organization, coincided with Robert Kennedy's visit to South Africa, and looked at the time to be a particularly vindictive use of power to punish Robertson for the effrontery of inviting so embarrassing a guest. His played-down background of wartime Nazi sympathy, that resulted in his personal detention, seemed to frame the whole picture. No, Balthazar Vorster most decidedly did not generate well-founded anticipation for happier days in the Cape of Good Hope.

Since the assassination of Verwoerd, Vorster has performed like a chameleon. At home, South Africa walks in the footsteps of the master; constant assurance is given that Verwoerd's policies are to be followed. Afrikaans editors tie themselves and their readers in knots in an attempt to rationalize the changes. Recently, for instance, the difference in principle between having a cup of tea with a black visitor from overseas and having one with an equally sophisticated native South African has been editorialized. Explaining why he was not accepting the British Embassy's invitation to a multiracial party honoring the Queen's birthday, a Nationalist editor made a tortuous distinction. The simple social courtesies shown to a black visitor from overseas could be justified on the principle that relations with the country concerned might be improved. To take tea with a nonwhite South African, on the other hand, would involve the totally unacceptable principle of digging the white man's grave. Certainly the apartheid laws are being

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applied as ferociously as ever they were, with new ones constantly attacking any surviving integration.

Not for one moment can it be assumed, therefore, that any policy changes made by Vorster, either to influence opinion overseas or for the direct economic or political benefit of South Africa, will have the slightest intentional effect on the domestic application of the policy of apartheid. If the volume of oppressive legislation appears to be decreasing, it is because its purpose is now almost fulfilled.

Even so, a new Population Registration Act will reduce considerably the chances of borderline colored persons being reclassified white. The children of persons married lawfully as whites will be reclassified colored if one of the parents undergoes reclassification as nonwhite. The powers of the Supreme Court in race classification cases are to be diminished, a serious blow to the hopes of those whose appeals to the Race Board against their racial classification still number one appeal a day. The Group Areas Act is being enforced with increasing strictness. Such a retrograde policy can only result in suffering to countless nonwhite people who, purely on the grounds of their race, are finding their entire home, family, and often their established business life broken up by compulsory removal from areas arbitrarily declared "white." The law forbidding intermarriage is now extended to cover South African citizens living abroad.

Counterbalancing the new look for export, incredible blunders are still being made at home. The refusal of visas to prominent foreign visitors like columnist Ralph McGill, publisher of the Atlanta *Constitution,* and Clark Kerr, ex-president of the University of California, is duly noted. My own difficulties in obtaining a visa to return to South Africa after a 1966 tour of the United States received international publicity which could easily have been avoided. Now in 1967 my deportation "in the public interest" raises widely reported doubts as to what South Africa's "public interest" really is! Tentacles of a police state still weave through the private lives of those who dare express any influentially fundamental disagreement with the government's racial policy. I have myself been visited and questioned by officers of the Special Branch, been refused permission to enter African reserves, had

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books seized—although only one apparently had been previously banned. During 1967, several Anglican clergy have been deported or refused extension of residence permits, and new regulations grant only one-year visas for all foreign missionaries. Pass law arrests of Africans are still running at two thousand a day. The Job Reservation Act, although an economic absurdity in view of the shortage of white skilled labor, continues to deny full expression of vocation and ability to nonwhites. The constant reminders of apartheid, with all its attendant humiliations of separate entrances and facilities everywhere but at the cash desk, affect the fifteen million nonwhites who remain a voteless and politically hopeless majority.

For overseas viewing, as to the casual tourist, the picture is different. Vorster has offered himself as the big white hope with almost messianic promises of a fuller revelation which one day the Western world, weary of exporting its rejected democracy, will gratefully recognize. A massive propaganda attempt has been more successful than anyone could have dared to hope, presenting a benign new image for South Africa. Suddenly South Africa projects herself as yearning to be understood, exuding international goodwill and extended toleration. It is as if the polecat had been a mink all along, and understandably the world is puzzled. It is not surprising that during 1967 United States State Department reaction has swung like a pendulum. In the absence of any ascertainable South African policy, reaction to events has ranged from the cancellation of leave for the carrier crew returning from Vietnam and the curtailment of their much publicized Cape Town stay, to Assistant Secretary of State Joseph Palmer's undisguised relief at least in his initial welcome to South Africa's new look.

South Africa presents an enigma all right. It is extremely difficult to know how to deal with her. Obviously, the friendliest possible relationship with South Africa is eminently desirable for the United States, Japan, Britain, and Europe in general. South Africa presents ever increasing import and export market potential. Her political stability and internal control of any factor that might affect her low cost and mobile labor policy make her an inviting host for foreign capital investment. Her gold and diamonds add glitter to her militantly supportive role in the anti-Communist

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front. She may dearly love to give more than verbal support to the United States Vietnam policy. The prospect, however, of South African mercenaries in Vietnam, freshly evicted from the Congo, can hardly be President Johnson's idea of support. Such a crumb of comfort might have consequences to the digestion that even he would find socially embarrassing! Certainly the strongest, most stable state in Africa should be our friend, but the cost of friendship in the past years has been excessive.

The big price tag is apartheid, "separate development"—call it what you will. Not all the sunshine exports of South Africa can remove the revulsion engendered by its consequences. Any hint of compromise by the United States on all that apartheid means, would communicate condonation of legislated white supremacy and naked racism to the most racially conscious continent in the world. In its turn, this could trigger off such international and domestic repercussions as to price total acceptance of South Africa out of the diplomatic market. After all, the civil rights groups, now diverted into militant protest for peace, may not always have Vietnam as their rallying point. Robert Kennedy, furthermore, in any switch, has first option on the favor of the protesting generation as the one who braved the South African lion in his den before it became fashionable to call on Mr. Vorster.

A combination of very powerful circumstances, perceptively evaluated by Vorster, has caused the new look in South African policy that gives support to the concept of *détente*. In the first place, the existence on South Africa's doorstep, and enclaved within her boundaries, of the three new republics of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, has led to urgent, although anticipated, readjustment. South Africa can hardly afford a hostile Botswana as a cushion between herself and potentially aggressive African states to the north. Certainly neither economically nor politically can Botswana afford a hostile South Africa. Seretse Khama and Balthazar Vorster have come to mutually satisfactory terms, the only possible terms within any concept of *realpolitik*. Equally vital are cordial relations between South Africa and the enclaved independent republics, Swaziland and Lesotho. Chief Leabua Jonathan of Lesotho has made it quite clear that he knows on which side his bread is buttered so far as his poverty-stricken country's depend-

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ence upon South Africa is concerned. For obvious economic reasons, landlocked Malawi's President Banda has hurled caution to the winds so far as the predictably virulent reactions of the Organization for African Unity are concerned. Coldly realistic in terms of his country's desperate need for economic ties with South Africa, he has done what two years ago would have been inconceivable. South Africa has seized the opportunity offered and, too, performed the inconceivable, and Malawi cabinet ministers have been honored guests in South Africa, a mutually beneficial trade agreement has been signed, and full diplomatic relations are envisaged.

Existing economic and political contacts, which have survived not only every African effort to write off South Africa but every effort of Verwoerd and Eric Louw to commit political suicide on the continent, are now rapidly maturing assets. Africa as a whole stands to gain from them. South Africa sees her golden opportunity to utilize her economic and political power on the vehicle of that scientific know-how so desperately needed in Africa, to play her potentially dynamic role of leadership. The impact of this possibility is not lost on Western eyes. The stability of South Africa in any Western alliance is an extremely happy alternative to the decimated structures of democracy littering the African scene. But South Africa's open initiative in utilizing whatever winds of change still exist in Africa has limited potential in providing open acceptance within the Western alliance. The big problem will be to overcome the moral obstacles of such a liaison. What remains is for Vorster, on the one hand, to understand the tremendous complications overseas of any suggestion of acceptance of his domestic policies. On the other hand, the United States and the West must be sensitive too. There would be equally tremendous obstacles in the human factors to be faced by Vorster within his own domestic situation, should any policy changes or evolution present South Africa with the disintegration of apartheid.

Behind the new look that South Africa is projecting is the very real awareness by Vorster that South Africa badly needs friends—itself a major breakthrough. On the other hand, any evaluation of the new look must see South Africa's domestic policy and her projected new image overseas as two sides of the same coin. A combination of Western disillusionment with black Africa's rejection of

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exported democracy and plain simple time suggests nothing but long-range political gain to Vorster. For such a precious element of time, policy concessions so far are insignificant. The capital investment of goodwill thus far may lead to partial acceptance of South Africa into the international community. It is a realistic assessment that much greater demands for change in depth can be made before acceptance is complete. Vorster's major play is to create a dependency relationship with those African states willing to accept South African aid. To achieve this is to turn off the heat at its most explosive source. The black African states themselves have lost much of their early brashness and belligerent hostility to South Africa. Much failure has produced insecurity and willingness to face realistic assessment of poverty and ignorance, where in fact the real agony of Africa lies. Expediency may provide a shell within which moral outrage against apartheid may be contained. There is a new climate. There is a power vacuum and, unless the brake of apartheid brings the whole movement to a whiplash-producing stop, the impasse of African disunity could well be ended by the *détente cordiale*.

The effect on South Africa eventually must be considerable. Economic, political, diplomatic, technological and educational contacts with the new Africa must produce drastic readjustment in South African thinking. For the first time, the African will be seen by white South Africans in Johannesburg and Cape Town as an Oxford educated diplomat, as a real human being perfectly capable of reciprocating a civilized relationship. This will be a far cry from the African's image as the Bantu boy, who, in South Africa, has seen the world only as a reflection while he polishes his madame's stoep. Relaxation of a few of the more odious elements of apartheid in sport may enable the white South African to see foreign nonwhites compete in international sport within the Republic.

All this leaves a great deal to be desired. There is to be no relaxation of apartheid in sport so far as South African nonwhites competing against whites in their own country are concerned. Mr. Vorster has been at pains to emphasize that no principle of domestic apartheid is to be affected—that there will be no mixed domestic sport, not even so far as watching is concerned. But yet a step has been made and the possibilities of the rub-off value of any equal rela-

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tionships are considerable. Maybe the new sport policy is a whitewash job, boosting minor concessions to enable white South Africans to be relieved of the fear of total world isolation in their increasing deprivation of international sport. Maybe many more important political concessions are designed to extricate South Africa from the possibility of escalation of sanctions in Rhodesia—unhealthily close in more ways than one to South Africa herself. Maybe her outreach to Malawi and elsewhere on the African continent is motivated by the need for expanding markets. But between the Mexico City Olympics and United Nations debates on South West Africa, between the age of Verwoerd and Vorster's today, concessions have been made. To the daily life of the nonwhite of South Africa, this means nothing in his long-suffered deprivations. To the world at large, however, it is a ray of hope and most reasonably should be seen and encouraged as such. Somewhere in all this could be the miracle drug that stops the cancer of apartheid at its source. Maybe it will come from the possibility of expansion in a more economically favorable world climate, maybe from the continuation of political pressures and the fear of cultural and political isolation when the sportsmen of the world have Brotherhood Week in Mexico City. Maybe, above Table Mountain, in the beautiful Cape Town bay, there is a hint of real sunshine that could spread northward.

One thing is sure. If Balthazar ("Call me 'John' ") Vorster is to emulate his namesake's legendary role as one of the original wise men in Africa, his offering to the world will have to be of a more fundamental and human quality than South Africa's gold. It could be—mind you, just could be—that Vorster has realized this. Meanwhile, the world withholds its judgment on the hallmark of his worth.

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Influences on Einstein's Early Work in Relativity Theory

GERALD HOLTON

LYMAN BUTTERFIELD, THE DISTINGUISHED HISTORIAN and editor of the Adams Papers at the Massachusetts Historical Society, recently gave a talk in which he illustrated the French maxim *"pas des documents, pas d'histoire"* with a significant anecdote. There is a story that one day Harry Truman had come upon Mrs. Truman while she was in the act of burning letters he had written to her long ago. "You shouldn't burn the letters, Bess," he said to her. "I have read them, several times," said she. "But have you considered History?" said he. "I have," said she, tossing the last bundle into the flames.

At the other end of the spectrum of those who have considered the needs of historic research, there is the statement in the report prepared by the United States National Historical Documentation Commission for President Kennedy in 1963:

> History is profoundly important because it enriches life . . . The thoughtful man is almost invariably a student of history, for he understands that one who knows nothing of the past, like a people ignorant of its origins, is a man without roots, passing through life in a sort of half-conscious sleep, almost defenseless against the problems of his day and against those who would misuse or manipulate him.

The attitude of physicists toward documentary research in the history of science fits somewhere between these two ends of the spectrum, and it is rather clear that the center of gravity of this group is moving closer to the second than to the first. Of course, documents do not by themselves tell the truth. But documents are all that will survive us, and all that will some day tell the distant future who we were and what we were doing. To concentrate on the public (published) scientist, and to exclude the private scientist

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(as seen with the aid of letters, daybooks, drafts and other documents) is now realized quite widely to be an error, because it would give us and our followers as little by way of understanding who the scientists were as would be the case if we tried to understand the founders of our Republic only through their published state papers.

So far, physics in this century has had three particularly great periods: the mid-twenties, which are being documented by a vigorous joint project of the American Physical Society and the American Philosophical Society; the physics of today, for which the American Institute of Physics in New York is collecting documentation in its new Center for the History and Philosophy of Physics; and the period of the first decade of this century, of which I want to speak here and which is the subject of research for a growing number of historians of science.

Archival Sources

On March 11, 1952, Albert Einstein wrote to Carl Seelig:

> Between the conception of the idea of this special relativity theory and the completion of the corresponding publication, there elapsed five or six weeks. But [he added rather cryptically] it would be hardly correct to consider this as a birth date, because earlier the arguments and building blocks were being prepared over a period of years, although without bringing about the fundamental decision.[1]

Can we get some idea of what may have happened during those years and what—or who—helped to bring about the "fundamental decision"?

I have been interested in studying the various influences that worked their way into Einstein's early publications on relativity, and conversely the reception accorded to his publications and ideas. How large or how small was the effect of the work of earlier physicists? Is there some strong influence that has so far been overlooked? In what respects was Einstein's view of the problem different from that of his contemporaries—for example, in the role that experimental results played compared with epistemological considerations? And how do such differences explain the rather hostile early response of the scientific community to his work?

The style of Einstein's great first paper of 1905 on relativity,

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"Zur Elektrodynamik bewegter Körper," was markedly different from what was then current, accepted practice; different, for example, from H. A. Lorentz's or Emil Cohn's, whose theories of electrodynamics of moving bodies was taken quite seriously at the time, for example, by Bucherer and Abraham. Nor are there really sufficient clues in the literature which biographers cite that help us to understand the structure of that paper. It starts with a curious question: why is there in Maxwell's theory one equation for finding the electromotive force generated in a moving conductor when it goes past a stationary magnet, and another equation when the conductor is stationary and the magnet is moving? After all, it is only the relative motion between conductor and magnet that counts; therefore a single equation should hold for both cases. Then, without specifically mentioning by name any of the now-so-famous experiments, the introductory section of the paper ends by dismissing the conceptions of absolute motion and of the ether. There follows the crucial section, *"Kinematischer Teil,"* which develops relativistic kinematics through a fundamental philosophical examination of the concepts of space and time. Only later on comes the treatment of Maxwell's equations, and finally, almost as an afterthought, some predictions about electron motion, ending with the equations "according to which the electron must move in conformity with the theory presented here." The only one who is given credit for being helpful in discussions leading to the writing of the paper is a friend, co-worker at the Patent Office, and former fellow-student of Einstein, an engineer named Michelange Besso.

This was a strange and unique way of writing a paper on electrodynamics in 1905. Max von Laue, one of the first and foremost partisans for and contributors to relativity theory, nevertheless confessed to Miss Margot Einstein in a letter of October 23, 1959, that he had felt fundamental difficulties for a long time. He wrote that after the publication of Einstein's paper in 1905, "slowly but steadily a new world opened before me. I had to spend a great deal of effort on it . . . And particularly epistemological difficulties gave me much trouble. I believe that only since about 1950 have I mastered them." Leopold Infeld, in his book, *Albert Einstein* (1950), similarly writes (p. 23):

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The title sounds modest, yet as we read it we notice almost immediately that it is different from other papers. There are no references; no authorities are quoted, and the few footnotes are of an explanatory character. The style is simple, and a great part of this article can be followed without advanced technical knowledge. But its full understanding requires a maturity of mind and taste that is more rare and precious than pedantic knowledge, for Einstein's paper deals with the most basic problems; it analyzes the meaning of concepts that might seem too simple to be scrutinized. . . .

So, in retrospect, it is not entirely surprising that it took also a long brooding period for Einstein himself before this remarkable work was hatched. But where, when and from whom might Einstein have obtained some of his point of view, his questions and his method?

One way to begin to find out is, of course, to look at documents. Therefore, after these questions had raised themselves, I began to search for whatever documents might have survived that would be relevant. In the possession of Albert Einstein's Estate, and kept for the time being at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, there are indeed documents—about twenty metal file drawers full, counting only the more scientific part of Einstein's manuscripts and the largely unpublished correspondence.

Einstein's devoted secretary, Miss Helen Dukas, has been putting the documents into systematic order; over the past few years, we have catalogued the material. Copies of correspondence are continually being received and added, but a preliminary archival calendar is now fairly well finished, and it has begun to be put to use in scholarly work. In this paper itself I shall be drawing on a number of hitherto unpublished documents, and thereby can hope to furnish one example of the many problems that can now be attacked with the aid of the archives.

In addition to the letters, there are eleven notebooks, starting from Einstein's student days; a few travel diaries; folders upon folders of published manuscripts, many in early draft; and several dozen unpublished manuscripts. All this survived, more or less by good luck: On returning from a trip to the United States in the winter of 1932-33, Einstein found on reaching Europe that Hitler's supporters had taken over in Germany. Einstein never again set foot

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on German soil, and most of the correspondence was brought out by diplomatic pouch through the French Embassy.

One of the first things I looked for was, of course, any manuscript or draft of Einstein's 1905 paper on relativity theory. But particularly for the early papers, Einstein must have destroyed or discarded the manuscripts when they were returned from the printer, if they ever were. Einstein himself had occasion to regret this. For during a War Bond drive in the United States during World War II, he was asked to donate the manuscript, and when he could not oblige in this way, he wrote the paper out all over again in longhand. Miss Dukas recalls that she dictated it to him from his published paper, and that he interrupted her, shaking his head and saying, "I could have said this more simply." The temptation to write something different, however, was overcome, and the manuscript was "auctioned" off to the person who promised to buy the largest amount of War Bonds (which turned out to be several million dollars), and who, in turn, deposited the manuscript in the Library of Congress in Washington.[2]

Thus there is no contemporaneous draft or manuscript from which one might learn something of the genesis of the paper. But there are two notebooks that Einstein kept while still a student at the Polytechnic Institute (E.T.H.) at Zurich during the period 1897 to 1900. Both are sets of lecture notes taken in the physics course given by Heinrich Friedrich Weber whose special field of work was alternating-current technology. One of them is on heat and thermodynamics, the other on technical problems such as liquefaction of gases (with detailed drawings), and electricity from Coulomb's law to induction. But it does not even go to Maxwell's work! And on that hangs part of this tale. For what was left out in class was exactly what young Einstein was waiting for. The fact that he was thrown on his own devices had, as we shall see, some interesting consequences in the genesis of relativity theory.[3]

Reading at Home

As Besso wrote (in his notes of August 1946 for Strickelberg's article on Einstein in Switzerland), Einstein came to the Aarau Kanton-School in 1896 "with the [then much debated] questions concerning the palpability [*Greifbarkeit*] of ether and of atoms"

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in mind. When he went on to the Polytechnic Institute in Zurich, the lectures on physics made no great impression on Einstein, who found his teachers' discussions "self-explanatory." It was indeed his professor, Weber, who, Besso reports, said once to Einstein, "You are a clever fellow! But you have one fault: One can't tell you anything, one can't tell you anything." Clearly, Weber could not.[4]

This circumstance is corroborated by Einstein's classmate, Louis Kollros (in *Helle Zeit-Dunkle Zeit,* Carl Seelig, editor, Zurich, 1956):

> There was not very much theoretical physics done at the Poly, which was strong in mathematics. . . . [Weber's] lectures concerning classical physics were lively; but we waited in vain for an exposition of Maxwell's theory. We knew that the theory was founded in the identity of the transmission of electricity and light, and that the work of Hertz concerning electric waves had verified the theory. We would have gladly learned more about it. Above all, it was Einstein who was disappointed [for, as Einstein recalls in his Autobiographical Notes, it was "the most fascinating subject at the time"]. In order to fill this gap, he undertook to study on his own the works of Helmholtz, Maxwell, Hertz, Boltzmann, and Lorentz.

Kollros' list of authors reminds us of the famous passage in Einstein's Autobiographical Notes (in *Albert Einstein, Philosopher-Scientist,* P. Schilpp, editor, 1949) which does seem relevant to the question of early influences shaping the thoughts expressed in the 1905 relativity paper. The passage (p. 15) concerns the period of 1897-1900:

> I entered the Polytechnic Institute of Zürich as a student of mathematics and physics. There I had excellent teachers (for example, Hurwitz, Minkowski), so that I really could have gotten a sound mathematical education. However, I worked most of the time in the physical laboratory, fascinated by the direct contact with experience. The balance of the time I used in the main in order to study at home the works of Kirchhoff, Helmholtz, Hertz, etc.

The really interesting part may well be the study of the last, the *etc.* Who is hiding behind the phrase *"et cetera"*? Could it be somebody who prepared Einstein's way in presenting his relativity theory? We must, of course, not dismiss Kirchhoff, Helmholtz and Hertz, or for that matter Boltzmann, Mach, Poincaré and Lorentz.

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But these do not suffice to explain the form of Einstein's 1905 paper. If someone else exists, we should be able to find him.

Maxwell, Direct and Indirect

First, a look at the others. From June 1902 until October 1909, Einstein was at the Patent Office in Berne. According to a manuscript note from Besso in the Einstein Archives, the vacancy was *specifically advertised* as requiring an "intimate acquaintance with Maxwell's theory." Einstein qualified on this score by the time he submitted his relativity paper in June 1905—of that there is no doubt—and he must have known Maxwell's theory earlier. There are a number of corroborating statements other than Kollros' and Besso's, for example, in a letter to von Laue, sent by Einstein from Princeton on 17 January 1952:

> Dear Laue: I now have received your book concerning special relativity theory and find that it is very good. . . . [But] when one looks over your collection of proofs of the special relativity theory, one becomes of the opinion that Maxwell's theory is unquestionable. But in 1905 I already knew certainly that Maxwell's theory leads to false fluctuations of radiation pressure and, with it, to an incorrect Brownian motion of a mirror in a Planckian radiation cavity. In my view, one could not get around ascribing to radiation an objective atomistic structure which, of course, does not fit into the frame of Maxwell's theory. . . . Unfortunately, the fifty years which have since passed have not brought us closer to an understanding of atomistic structure of radiation.[5]

Granting that Einstein obviously knew Maxwell's theory by 1905, the question is left through which books he learned it. It may have been by direct study of Maxwell's work, although there is no documentary evidence for this. At any rate, direct study would not have been the only or even the most important way. Maxwell came to most German students of physics first through the works of Helmholtz, Boltzmann and Hertz.[6] They are in many ways quite different, but they also have at least one element in common: that these presentations of Maxwell's theory are quite un-Maxwellian, that, in different degrees, their style is even further from that of Maxwell than from Einstein's paper. On this point, a brief word must suffice here. For example, to a contemporaneous physicist in England and France, Helmholtz's way of thinking must have

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looked quite terrifying. Fully half of his introductory volume of the *Lectures on Theoretical Physics* is spent on the following topics: philosophy and science; physical science; critique of the old logic; concepts and their connotations; hypotheses as bases for the laws; the completeness of scientific experience and its practical significance; and so forth.[7]

Maxwell's work proper is presented in Volume 5 of Helmholtz's *Lectures on Theoretical Physics,* issued in 1897. The terminology there is one Einstein used to some extent later. What catches our eye is that there is very little attention to experimentation. One cannot, for example, find a reference to the Michelson experiments which, after all, were first tried under the sympathetic eye of Helmholtz himself. Even the section entitled "The Necessary Properties of the Ether" has no reference to experiments. And in the only paper that Helmholtz wrote specifically on the subject of Maxwell's theory, called "Consequences of Maxwell's Theory Concerning the Motion of the Pure Ether," there is not a single mention of actual experiments.

What Einstein might have obtained from studying Helmholtz's version of Maxwell's theory is first of all a reinforcement of a taste for a consciously epistemological approach, and a confirmation that in this area experiments do not count crucially.

Reading Hertz, whose collected works were available by 1895, and whose notation in electromagnetism he used to a large degree, Einstein will have seen Hertz's first thorough essay on "The Fundamental Equations of Maxwell's Electrodynamics," published in 1884, and the article significantly entitled "Concerning the Fundamental Equations of Electrodynamics for Moving Bodies" of 1890. Even this greatest of experimenters in the field of electromagnetism makes no mention of the "ether" experiments that have loomed so large in recent discussions of the origins of relativity theory. On the other hand, the main effect that a study of Hertz's work might have had upon a reader like Einstein is perhaps best characterized by Hertz's own remark in the *Principles of Mechanics:* "In general, I owe very much to the fine book concerning the development of mechanics by Mach." It was one of very many forces urging young Einstein toward Ernst Mach. As he said later in his Autobiographical Notes, Mach's *Science of Mechanics* "shook

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this dogmatic faith" in "mechanics as the final basis of all physical thinking. . . . This book exercised a profound influence upon me in this regard while I was a student. . . . Mach's epistemological position . . . influenced me very greatly. . . ."[8]

Ernst Mach

Indeed, it is an ironic circumstance that the state of contemporary research physics during the period when the young Einstein began to work on special relativity was really not characterized by such a degree of dogmatic rigidity as he thought. As Stephen Brush has recently pointed out,[9] the mechanistic view of physical reality was then defended by only a "few lonely men such as Boltzmann. . . . The most 'advanced' and 'sophisticated' theories were those that took a purely phenomenological viewpoint: Scientific theories should deal only with the relations of observable quantities, and should strive for economy of thought rather than trying to explain phenomena in terms of unobservable entities. . . ." In short, around 1900 Mach's views were no longer those of an isolated fighter, the role in which he rather liked to see himself and in which he appeared in his books that young Einstein read.[10]

Something of this flavor comes through in letters in Einstein's correspondence, and a famous passage in Einstein's Autobiographical Notes is closely related:

> Reflections of this type made it clear to me as long ago as shortly after 1900, i.e., shortly after Planck's trail-blazing work, that neither mechanics nor thermodynamics could (except in limiting cases) claim exact validity. By and by I despaired of the possibility of discovering the true laws by means of constructive efforts based on known facts. The longer and the more despairingly I tried, the more I came to the conviction that only the discovery of a universal formal principle could lead us to assured results.

No matter how some of the younger physicists of the time wrestled with the problems of physics, the use of conceptions developed in nineteenth-century physics seemed to them merely to produce failure and despair. It is not too much to say that the new physics they fashioned was first of all *"eine Physik der Verzweiflung."* And here the role of Mach as iconoclast and critic of classical conceptions was particularly important; for whether or not Einstein's assessment of the contemporary scene was right, it is

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certain that Mach's critical force and courage made a strong impression on him, as on so many others.[11]

Poincaré and Lorentz

The influence on and response to Einstein's work on the part of both Poincaré and Lorentz have also been a fascinating problem for the historian of recent science. Although the old myths will not die quickly, they have been pretty well exploded.[12] To put it briefly, and without intending in the slightest to denigrate Poincaré's enormous accomplishments, we may say that Poincaré saw the "crisis" in physics as one primarily revolving about experimental difficulties, and therefore involving neither epistemological nor fundamentally different theoretical reorientation. This is, of course, directly antithetical to Einstein's view of the matter at about the same time: The new *experimental* findings, such as the Michelson-Morley experiment, neither provoked the crisis as Einstein saw it, nor were they guides to the new orientation needed. That Einstein's work in 1905 was independent of Poincaré's investigations on electromagnetism in 1904-05 has now been repeatedly and adequately established.

When it comes to the debt or independence of Einstein with respect to Lorentz's work, and the response of Lorentz to Einstein's early papers, the record is also quite clear. Einstein and others have repeatedly said that he did not know of Lorentz's 1904 paper on electromagnetic phenomena.[13] On this well-worked ground, perhaps one need only to point out anecdotally how difficult it would have been for an almost unknown Patent Office employee in a Swiss town such as Berne to have had direct access to the *Proceedings of the Amsterdam Academy* in which Lorentz published the 1904 paper. In the Rijksarchiv at The Hague, Holland, I found a letter from M. von Laue, writing to Lorentz on November 30, 1905, from Berlin, apparently for the first time, and in his capacity as *Assistent* at the Institute for Theoretical Physics (therefore, as Planck's assistant):

> Since the Proceedings of the Amsterdam Academy are here more difficult to obtain than other journals—they exist only in the Royal Library, and it lends out recent journals only for a day—I take the liberty of expressing to you the request to send me, if possible, a re-

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print of your publication, 'Electromagnetic Phenomena in a System Moving with Any Velocity Less than that of Light. . . .'[14]

If one had to summarize the difference between Lorentz's and Einstein's relativity physics in a sentence, one might say this: Lorentz's work can be seen somewhat as that of a valiant and extraordinary captain rescuing a patched ship that is being battered against the rocks of experimental fact, whereas Einstein's work, far from being a direct theoretical response to unexpected experimental results, is a creative act of disenchantment with the mode of transportation itself—an escape to a rather different vehicle altogether.

An Almost Forgotten Teacher

This brings us back for a final assault on the problem of the possible antecedents of Einstein's work. Neither the shape nor the content of Einstein's 1905 paper is adequately explained as a sequel to the chain Lorentz-Poincaré, or Maxwell-Helmholtz-Boltzmann, or even Kirchhoff-Mach-Hertz. It is, of course, possible that Einstein's 1905 paper was a Minerva-like creation with no direct preparatory antecedent. And not having found any models in the works of the major contributors of the time, we may be tempted to make this assumption, even if reluctantly.

But it turns out that we do not have to do this. Working with the documents in the Princeton Archives, I came across a clue that raises the possibility of entertaining a quite different and unconventional view of the direct ancestry of Einstein's thought processes leading to his 1905 paper. Once, and quite casually, there appeared the name of a now almost unknown physicist who has here not yet been mentioned. It is August Föppl—a name vaguely familiar to a number of older German scientists and engineers, but to almost nobody else.

He sounds very much out of place compared to "Kirchhoff, Helmholtz, Hertz, etc."—so much so that he might well have ended up among the *"et ceteras"* mentioned in the autobiographical note of Einstein. And indeed, the search for the identity of August Föppl starts very badly: Born in 1854, Föppl was, at the age of thirty-six, a technical high school teacher and administrator in Leipzig when he published his first book, a rather pedestrian

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little outline of elementary physics. From the first exercise of this *Leitfaden* (how rapidly must a disc spin to throw off a lightly adhering object?) to the last (explain parallel winding in a.c. machines), there is nothing to indicate that this man could ever enter our story.

Two years later, now a civil engineer in Leipzig, Föppl published his first real book, *Das Fachwerk in Raume*. The book works up some previous essays that Föppl had used for his degree candidacy at the University of Leipzig in 1886, and, one supposes, in connection with this subsequent task of helping to design the Markthalle of Leipzig. Yet, the book is by no means intended as a mere practical manual. On the contrary, Föppl objects to the definition by which *Fachwerk* usually is regarded as a structure made of solid straight rods, to carry loads. "For me it is a purely ideal structure" (p. 3). And in defense of this point he plunges into an epistemological digression concerning the process and warrant of introducing concepts such as rigid bodies, or ether, "which by no means in every respect coincide with their *'realen Urbildern.'* "

And then, in 1892, Föppl was called to the University of Leipzig to teach, of all things, agricultural machinery. As he later confessed cheerfully, he knew very little about this subject, so he spent the summer touring factories to find out. His versatile intelligence seems to have helped him to absorb in a short time enough to enable him to teach the course soon thereafter. But the subject was not what his mind reached out for. And so, perhaps largely out of boredom, he began to write a book in his spare time. It became a treatise entitled *Introduction to Maxwell's Theory of Electricity,* published in 1894. The work was a success: upon its publication, it "aroused astonishment [*Aufsehen*] in the profession, for at that time the electrodynamic considerations of the great English physicist, Maxwell, had hardly gained any ground"—to cite the introductory essay of the editors of the *Festschrift* published in Föppl's honor on his seventieth birthday, 25 January 1924.[15] This was the ancestor of a series of revisions, known to students of electricity as Abraham-Föppl (1904, 1907, 1911), later Abraham-Becker (1930), later Becker-Sauter (1958, 1964)—although the original was very different from all these revised editions.

Föppl's book was widely bought, particularly because of the

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author's ability to put Maxwell's theory clearly to engineers. Perhaps as a result of this success, Föppl was called in 1894 to the Technical University at Munich—the very city in which Einstein was then living, still a boy of fifteen—and there Föppl stayed and wrote volubly, although as far as I can find out, he never taught from his book on Maxwell's theory.

Before we look at Föppl's *Maxwell,* we must size up the particular style that characterized his thinking, and this is done most simply by considering Föppl's immensely successful next work, the *Vorlesungen über technische Mechanik,* published from 1898 on in several parts. (The *Festschrift,* page vi, notes that up to 1924 nearly 100,000 volumes of this work were sold all over the world.) Föppl himself sent seven editions through the press, and others after him continued this work.

The Foreword of Föppl's *Mechanik,* dated June 1898, tells us something rather revealing about his special talent as a teacher and writer. His students, he confesses, have sometimes complained that he "proceeds too slowly rather than too fast," but he places very special emphasis on laying the foundations carefully. It is almost as if he had a special eye for a reader who might not have the benefit of formal lectures on the subject, and who might even have bad holes in his formal background.

After the encouraging Foreword, the reader comes up against the first two sentences of the text, typical in their mixture of straightforwardness and discursiveness: "Mechanics is a part of physics. Its teaching rests, as does that of all natural sciences, in the last analysis on experience." And with this, he turns to a discussion of the meaning of the term "experience" [*Erfahrung*]. By page 4, he confesses "it is now, of course, no longer a question of mechanics, but a philosophical and epistemological question. Its discussion can, however, not be circumvented in an introduction to mechanics, no matter how, on the basis of earlier unfavorable experiences, one may shy away from touching on philosophical questions in the exact sciences." Föppl announces that his exposition of antimetaphysical and self-conscious empiricism is shared by leading scientists generally, and he specifically calls on three by name, in whose spirit he believes he is proceeding: Kirchhoff, Heinrich Hertz (once at Munich University) and—Ernst Mach. Indeed, the vol-

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ume on dynamics starts with the section entitled "Relative Motion," and in the Preface Föppl says again: "One will notice that the [early part of the volume] is strongly influenced by the work of Mach, which made a persistent impression on me."[16]

Föppl's Maxwell

We are beginning to see some evidences of the kind of approach to physics which would appeal to a young reader with the kind of background, or lack of background, of Einstein in the late 1890's. This impression is much reinforced when we now return to Föppl's *Introduction to Maxwell's Theory of Electricity* of 1894. He writes in his Foreword that now not only the professional physicist, the teacher, and the student in physics, but also "the scientifically trained electrotechnical engineer[17] is attempting to make himself acquainted with the foundations of this [Maxwell's] theory in which today one may see with great probability the permanent foundation of every physical research in this domain. . . . With this there is a recent demand for an exposition of Maxwell's theory that is as widely understandable as possible, but also scientifically correct."

Maxwell's original work, Föppl reports, is too difficult, and it has many mistakes or incompletenesses which in the meantime have been removed. Boltzmann, he says, has written an exposition, but although nothing better of its kind can be done, Föppl sees need for another, different attempt. What Föppl particularly wants to provide is a "clear understanding of the concepts and considerations of this theory in order to give the reader the ability for his own, unsupervised work" [*"selbststaendigen Arbeiten"*]—in short, just the kind of book an interested student would want if he were deprived of Maxwell's theory in course lectures.[18]

In Föppl's book we find six main sections: the first is on vector calculus; the second on fundamental electricity (Gauss's Theorem, Coulomb's Law, magnetism, induction, *et cetera)*; the third and fourth are the usual extensions (pondermotive forces, vector potential, energy relations in the electromagnetic field between stationary conductors). So far, it is all done competently and patiently, but as if it were merely a prelude to something else.

Then we come to the fifth main section, which turns out to be

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of particular interest to us. It is entitled "The Electrodynamics of Moving Conductors" ["*Die Elektrodynamik bewegter Leiter*" (pp. 307-356)], and the first chapter in it is entitled "Electromotive Force Induced by Movement." The first paragraph in this first chapter is "Relative and Absolute Motion in Space," and starts in an unusual way:

> The discussions of kinematics, namely of the general theory of motion, usually rest on the axiom that in the relationship of bodies to one another only relative motion is of importance. There can be no recourse to an absolute motion in space since there is absent any means to find such a motion if there is no reference object at hand from which the motion can be observed and measured. . . . According to both Maxwell's theory and the theory of optics, empty space in actuality does not exist at all. Even the so-called vacuum is filled with a medium, the ether.
>
> . . . the conception of space without this content [ether] is a contradiction, somewhat as if one tries to think of a forest without trees. The notion of completely empty space would be not at all subject to possible experience; or, in other words, we would first have to make a deep-going revision of that conception of space which has been impressed upon human thinking in its previous period of development. *The decision on this question forms perhaps the most important problem of science of our time.* (Italics supplied.)

Föppl is not ready to give up the ether or absolute motion, but he knows where the physically important problems lie. He continues a few lines later in this way:

> When in the following we make use of the laws of kinematics for relative motion, we must proceed with caution. We must not consider it as *a priori* settled that it is, for example, all the same whether a magnet [moves] in the vicinity of a resting electric circuit or whether it is the latter that moves while the magnet is at rest.

This, we recall, describes precisely the experimental situation with which Einstein's paper starts—and Föppl adds immediately a rather familiar kind of *Gedanken*-experiment: "To decide this question, we can consider a third case." He proposes to think of both magnet and conductor moving together, with no relative motion between them. Experience shows, he says, that in this case the "absolute motion" in itself causes no electric or magnetic force in either body. This thought experiment is then quickly developed to show that in the previous two cases what counts is only relative motion.

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Later, Föppl goes on to discuss the interaction of moving magnets and resting conductors (pp. 314-320), and resting magnets and moving conductors (pp. 321-324). The rest of this section, too, may be directed first of all to engineers (unipolar induction, emf for a moving conductor, magnetomotive force, motion of a wire loop in a magnetic field, *et cetera*).

There is a rather brief last (sixth) part, a summary of the other aspects of Maxwell's work, including electromagnetic waves—again, virtually without a reference to the actual ether experiments. But our attention stays fixed on the fifth section of Föppl's book; there, and in portions of the rest of the book, is the kind of thinking that would indeed have appealed to Einstein, and that in fact is far closer to the sequence and style of argument of Einstein's 1905 paper than the work of any of the others who are more familiar—far more so than the books on electromagnetism by Maxwell, Helmholtz, Boltzmann, Hertz or Runge, for example.

Other References to Föppl

But before the parallelism with Föppl carries the day, we must ask for more evidence. After all, earlier we dismissed the suggestion that Einstein built on Poincaré's and Lorentz's work of 1904, even though there are certain parallels.

We therefore must ask, why did not anyone else who knew Einstein intimately vouch in print for the fact that Einstein read Föppl's book? Thus I asked my former teacher and colleague, Einstein's biographer, Philipp Frank, why he had made no mention of Föppl in his book *Einstein: His Life and Times* (Alfred Knopf, New York, 1947). Frank replied that he thought he had mentioned Föppl, and I showed him my copy of the biography in which it was plain that he had not. This was a considerable surprise to Frank, but after some thought he referred me to the German edition of his book (Paul List Verlag, 1949, p. 38). In the Foreword, Frank explained that this, the German edition, is the first complete edition of his manuscript as written in 1939-1941 (whereas the English-language publisher had made many cuts). And there, on page 38, Frank writes that during his years as a student at the Polytechnicum in Zurich,

Einstein threw himself into the work of these classics of theoretical

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physics [of the late nineteenth century], the lectures of Helmholtz, Kirchhoff, Boltzmann, the electricity theory of J. C. Maxwell and H. Hertz, and their exposition in the text book of Abraham-Föppl. Einstein buried himself with a certain fanaticism day and night in these books from which he learned how one builds up the mathematical framework and then with its help constructs the edifice of physics.[19]

And there is one other guide that leads us to Föppl. There exist, of course, dozens of biographies of Einstein—most of them written at second or third hand. Here, the Archives at Princeton held a surprise for me. I knew that a certain Anton Reiser had published an Einstein biography in English in 1930, when Einstein was still in Berlin. Despite a pleasant foreword by Einstein ("the author of this book knows me rather intimately . . . I found the facts of the book duly accurate. . . ."), at first glance it can hardly be considered a reliable book: for quite apart from the suspicious circumstance that no German edition was ever brought out, there are also no credentials for the author of the book. No other publications by Reiser exist, and a search in the usual sources leads one to suspect that he simply does not exist. Now the material in the Archives shows that the name Anton Reiser was a pseudonym for Rudolf Kayser; and Rudolf Kayser was Einstein's own son-in-law who had proceeded with the biography with Einstein's acquiescence. We return therefore to Reiser's obscure and difficult-to-find book with new respect—and sure enough, there we find Föppl again: ". . . the scientific courses offered to him in Zurich soon seemed insufficient and inadequate, so that he habitually cut his classes. His development as a scientist did not suffer thereby. With veritable mania for reading, day and night, he went through the works of the great physicists—Kirchhoff, Hertz, Helmholtz, Föppel" [*sic*].

So we may perhaps feel that the missing signal has been recovered from the noise level of the *"et cetera."* But in a real sense, genius does not have predecessors. It would of course be absurd to claim that Föppl in any way "explains" Einstein, or even that there is a simple chain connecting Föppl's book and Einstein's relativity theory. No, the proper attitude here is exactly Philipp Frank's in the passage cited: From books such as these, Einstein learned how one builds up the framework, and then with its help constructs the edifice of physics.

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In balance we may say the role of Föppl was that he, with Helmholtz on the one hand and Mach on the other, reinforced the unique aspects that made Einstein's 1905 paper so important (and, for his contemporaries, so difficult—unlikely though this now seems to a generation of physicists brought up on Dirac and Feynman). As the various contemporaneous treatments of electrodynamics show, in principle a great diversity of possible roads were open to Einstein. What Föppl was capable of providing in helping to shape Einstein's thought processes as he was fashioning the relativity theory was, first of all, encouragement to go ahead in a manner so very different from that taught to him at school and presented in all the respectable books by the foremost physicists. It helps us to understand better what to this day remains as the most startling part of Einstein's relativity paper: a mixture that contains a good share of youthful philosophizing as a part of doing physics; the recognition that the fundamental problem to be cracked is how to achieve a new point of view on the conceptions of time and space; the attention to *Gedanken*-experiments, and, conversely, a quite low interest in the actual detailed experiments which so many of our texts make appear to be the point of departure of relativity theory.

And there is also, I believe, some poignancy in the discovery how Föppl may have reached across to Einstein—the book of an "outsider" who did not have students to whom to teach its contents in lectures, falling into the hands of a student who, regarded as an "outsider" by his teachers, was looking to this book for the material and the stimulation that he could not get in their lectures.

In this study, we have looked at some documents that Einstein surely did not initially mean to be used for historic research. We can nevertheless be sure that Einstein would have understood and not objected to this purpose. For as he wrote to Besso (30 November 1949): "When I write you something, you can show it to anyone you like. I have long been above making secrets." And in another unpublished manuscript (No. 17, undated, not before 1931): "Science as an existing, finished [corpus of knowledge] is the most objective, most unpersonal [thing] human beings know, [but] science as something coming into being, as aim, is just as sub-

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jective and psychologically conditioned as any other of man's effort. . . ." And that aspect, he went on to say, one should certainly "permit oneself also." Happily, he and his friends and colleagues have done just that. They have left us the record of "science coming into being," and thereby they have enriched our understanding of scientific work in the larger sense.

I wish to acknowledge with gratitude the permission to quote excerpts, and other help received from the Trustees of the Albert Einstein Estate, and particularly from Miss Helen Dukas. My thanks go to the Rockefeller Foundation for partial financial support for cataloguing the documents; the director and staff of the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton have been most hospitable throughout this work. G.H.

NOTES

[1] The literary rights to quotations from the writings of Albert Einstein belong to the Estate of Albert Einstein; permission to use quotations should be secured from the Executor.

[2] And so it is both true and false that "Einstein's manuscript is now in the Library of Congress, Washington," as the *Bibliography of Scientific Papers of Albert Einstein*, compiled by E. Weil (London, 1960), tells us.

[3] But lest we regard the Swiss school uncommonly behind the times, we should recall the situation was not greatly different at Cambridge University, among many others. Ebenezer Cunningham wrote recently (private communication to Mr. S. Goldberg):

"You ask about books in use in my early days. The Tripos which I took in 1902 hardly dealt at all with Electrodynamics. Maxwell's work was too recent and had not reached text-book stage. Abraham's book was unknown, though it became the background of my own teaching on the subject on my return to Cambridge in 1911. I am tempted to think that I really introduced systematic teaching on the subject to Cambridge."

[4] Weber's successor, however, was the well-known physicist Pierre Weiss, who brought Einstein back to Zurich from Prague in 1912.

[5] A pamphlet entitled "*Erinnerungen an Albert Einstein*," covering the period of his employment at the patent office in Berne, and published by that office in 1965, contains a note by Einstein's colleague, Joseph Sauter, written in 1955. Sauter recalled that Einstein was admitted to the post of Technical Expert (Third Class) "without possessing the Diploma of Engineering, but as a physicist familiar with the theory of Maxwell. That theory was not yet on the official syllabus of the Polytechnique Institute of Zürich."

[6] It is technically possible that Einstein might have seen Poincaré's *Electricity and Optics*. Volume 1, on Maxwell's work, was the set of lectures of 1888-1889, published in 1890; and Volume 2, on the work of Helmholtz and Hertz, was the lectures of 1889-1890, published in 1891. Both works were translated into German and appeared in 1891. Articles by Poincaré were reviewed in the literature by Minkowski in 1890 and Hurwitz in 1896. But I have seen no evidence that Einstein read Poincaré's original or translated lectures.

[7] Although the great experimentalists Helmholtz and Hertz are least guilty in this respect, their books on electromagnetism do remind one of the passage in J. T. Merz, *A History of European Thought in the Nineteenth Century*, in which he compared the scientific spirit in British and Continental science: "Continental thinkers, whose lives are devoted to the realisation of some great ideal, complain of the want of method, of the erratic absence of discipline, which is peculiar to English genius. The fascination which

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practical interests exert in this country appears to them an absence of full devotedness to purely ideal pursuits. The English man of science would reply that it is unsafe to trust exclusively to the guidance of a pure idea, that the ideality of German research has frequently been identical with unreality, and that in no country has so much time and power been frittered away in following phantoms, and in systematising empty notions, as in the Land of the Idea; but he would as readily admit that his own country is greatly deficient in such organisations for combined scientific labour as exist abroad, and that England possesses no well-trained army of intellectual workers." (Volume I [1904], pp. 251-252.)

[8] Besso, writing in late 1947 to Einstein, reminds him that during the year of 1897 or 1898, Besso had drawn Einstein's attention to Mach, and he asks whether it is correct "that this introduction [to Mach] fell into a phase of development of the young physicist when the Machian style of thinking pointed decisively at observables—perhaps even, indirectly, to 'clocks and meter sticks?'" The correspondence of Einstein abounds with references to the influence of Mach in the formative years of relativity theory. For example, in a letter of August 8, 1942 to A. S. Nash, Einstein wrote: "In the case of Mach, the influence was not only through his philosophy, but also through his critique concerning the fundaments of physics."

[9] "Thermodynamics and History," *The Graduate Journal,* VII (1967), 477.

[10] On the contrary, it was the great H. A. Lorentz and H. Poincaré whose styles were coming to be out of step with the daring new, nonclassical physics exemplified by the Curies, Rutherford, Einstein himself, and at least at one point, even by Planck. Thus in an unpublished letter from Berlin (1931) from Max Planck to R. W. Wood, kindly made available by Professor Wood's son to the American Institute of Physics Center for the History and Philosophy of Physics, and on deposit at their Archives in New York: "Dear Colleague: You expressed recently, at our nice dinner at Trinity Hall, the wish that I should describe to you more concerning the psychological side of the considerations which led me at the time to postulate the hypothesis of energy quanta. Here I want to accommodate your wish. Briefly put, I can describe the whole effort as an act of desperation, for by nature I am peaceful and against dubious adventures. But I had been fighting already for six years, from 1894 on, with the problem of equilibrium between radiation and matter without having any success; I knew that this problem is of fundamental significance for physics; I knew the formula which provides the energy distribution in the normal spectrum; a theoretical explanation, therefore, *had* to be found at all cost, whatever the price. Classical physics was not sufficient, that was clear to me. . . . [Except for the two laws of thermodynamics] I was ready for any sacrifice of my established physical convictions. Now Boltzmann had explained that thermodynamic equilibrium comes about through statistical equilibrium, and when one applies these considerations to the equilibrium between matter and radiation, one finds that one can prevent the deterioration of energy in radiation by means of the supposition that energy is from the beginning forced to remain in certain quanta. This was a purely formal assumption, and I did not really think much about it except just this: No matter what the circumstances, may it cost what it will, I had to bring about a positive result." (Translation by G. H.)

[11] We cannot go here into the vast and important topic of the relation between Einstein and Mach. Suffice it to say that the archival materials help to illuminate each of the five stages in the drama: (1) Mach's place in physics and philosophy of science in the early years of this century; (2) Einstein's early acceptance of the main features of Mach's doctrine; (3) the Einstein-Mach correspondence and meeting; (4) the revelation in 1921 of Mach's sudden and brutal attack on Einstein's relativity theory (occasioned, it appears to me in good part by the fact that Mach discovered the anti-Machist kernel of Einstein's epistemology even before Einstein did himself); and (5) Einstein's own further development of a philosophy of knowledge in which he rejects many, but not all, of his earlier Machist tendencies. I have analyzed these stages, including the Machist component of Einstein's 1905 paper, in *"Où est la réalité? Les réponses d'Einstein," Science et synthèse* (Paris: Gallimard, 1967), pp. 97-140.

[12] For example, G. Holton, "On the Origins of the Special Theory of Relativity," *American Journal of Physics,* Vol. 28 (1960), 627; and G. Holton, "On the Thematic Analysis of Science: The Case of Poincaré and Relativity," in *Melanges Alexandre Koyré,* Vol. I (Paris: Hermann, 1964), 257.

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[13] For the evidences, see, for example, Holton, *op. cit.* In his lectures and publications Lorentz repeatedly gave generous credit to the novelty and independence of Einstein's work. See also, for example, Lorentz's remarks quoted in Silberstein's *Theory of Relativity*, p. 117, and Lorentz's footnote addendum on p. 10 of the 1912 edition of his 1904 essay, in H. A. Lorentz, *et al., Das Relativitätsprinzip* (Struttgarten: Teubner).

[14] The paper, originally printed as part of the Proceedings of the Academy meeting of April 23, 1904, was first published in the June 1904 issue of the Dutch-language edition of the Proceedings, and later in the English-language edition. At that time, incidentally, Einstein probably knew no Dutch and little, if any, English. In a letter to Besso, dating no earlier than 1913, Einstein writes: *"Ich lerne englisch (bei Wohlwand), langsam aber gründlich."*

[15] *Beiträge zur Technischen Mechanik und Technischen Physik* (Berlin, 1924), with essays by some of Föppl's students, including Theodor von Karman, Prandtl, H. Thoma, Timoschenko and Föppl's two sons, Ludwig and Otto. As this list alone shows, his influence was large, although predominantly in technical mechanics. In 1904, Föppl made a gyroscopic experiment to measure the rate of rotation of the earth, a work "which made him familiar with questions of absolute and relative motion." And in 1914, he wrote an essay *"Über Absolute und Relative Bewegung,"* a field "in which A. Föppl already, before Einstein, occupied himself with the relativity theory, though not with such remarkable success"—according to the editors' introduction in the *Festschrift.*

[16] Föppl had the satisfaction later that Mach, in the revised editions of the *Science of Mechanics,* referred to Föppl's contributions; e.g., in the Preface to the fourth edition, dated January 1901, Mach wrote, quite typically: ". . . the partial considerations which my expositions have received in the writings of Boltzmann, Föppl, Hertz, Love, Maggi, Pearson, and Slate, have awakened in me the hope that my work shall not have been in vain."

[17] It is, incidentally, worth noting that Einstein came to the Zurich E.T.H. initially planning to study engineering, and that both Einstein's father and closest uncle were in electrical engineering and manufacturing.

[18] One idiosyncracy of the book that interests us is explained in the following manner: "In this book I have left out citation of sources as a matter of principle. . . . I wanted to write not a Handbook but a *Lehrbuch* which should as far as possible be cast in one piece. Therefore, I avoided as far as at all possible during the writing going back to publications which I had read earlier in order that I may not be directly influenced by them. I wanted to be led by the developments and results of other authors only insofar as these matters had firmly penetrated into my memory and had become an intimate part of my own views. In this manner I hoped to attain a more unified and coherent exposition of the whole system than would have been possible by going another way."

As a consequence, there is a remarkable paucity of references to actual experimental situations (of course, none is made to the Michelson or other ether-drift experiments; but almost all references to any others are also missing).

[19] Since Max Abraham's version of August Föppl's book did not get done until 1904, it would be Föppl's original work that must be meant here; but this slip does remind us that a substantial fraction of several successive generations of physicists were brought up on—and then taught from—Abraham-Föppl and later Abraham-Becker.

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LOUIS SIMPSON

Indian Country

I. THE SHADOW-HUNTER

This prairie light . . . I see
A warrior and a child.

The man points, and the child
Runs after a butterfly.

Rising and floating in the windy field,
That's how they learned to run . . .

Plenty Coups,
Red Cloud, Coyote, Pine Marten.

Now I will lie down in the grass
That Plenty Coups loved.

There are voices in the wind, strong voices
In the tenderness of these leaves,

And the deer move with the shade
Into the hills I dream of.

There the young men live by hunting
The shadows of ideas,

And at night they march no further.
Their tents shine in the moonlight.

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II. BLACK KETTLE RAISES THE STARS AND STRIPES

"Nits make lice," said Chivington.
"Kill the nits and you'll get no lice."

The white men burst in at sunrise, shooting
and stabbing.
And there was old Black Kettle
Tying the Stars and Stripes to his tent pole,
And the squaws running in every direction

Around Sand Creek
A swept corner of the American consciousness.

And it's no use playing the tuba to a dead
Indian.

III. ON THE PRAIRIE

The wind in the leaves makes a sound
Like clear running water.

I can smell the store where harness used to
be sold . . .
Morning of little leaves,

Morning of cool, clear sunlight,
When the house stirred with the earnestness,

Of the life they really had . . .
Morning with a clang of machinery.

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Now an old man sits on the porch;
I can hear it every time he clears his throat . . .

As I stand here, holding the jack,
In the middle of my generation,

By the Lethe of asphalt and dust
And human blood spilled carelessly.

When I look back I see
A field full of grasshoppers.

The hills are hidden with a cloud.
And what pale king sits in the glass?

WHEN I PUBLISHED "Black Kettle Raises the Stars and Stripes" in my *Selected Poems,* 1965, the poem seemed to have no connection with anything else; it was an incident floating in space. Odd . . . that I should suddenly be concerned with Indians. Then I published a few lines—in two-line units—about Plenty Coups and the butterfly, in the *Times Literary Supplement.* A poem developed from these lines was then published in the SCHOLAR (Autumn, 1966) as "The Shadow-hunter." Again I felt a doubt: why the interest in Indians? Also, the form of "The Shadow-hunter" seemed wrong: three ungainly stanzas. Besides, the last two lines, "Their thoughts lie in the moonlight . . . ," seemed falsely naïve, as though I'd been aiming at Blake and hit the banal.

Some months ago I began working with images that had haunted me for some time:

> A field full of grasshoppers.
> And what pale king sits in the glass?

Also, the picture of a man standing by a stopped car, working a jack, in the middle of Minnesota, had still to be exorcised—although this too had been published, in a poem called "American

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Classic." You see out of what fragments and false starts I labor. So "On the Prairie" formed, in two-line units. This new poem, also, had something to say about Indians—that is, a Minnesota landscape. My thoughts went back to the Indian poems I'd published. I fiddled again with "The Shadow-hunter," and it fell into the same two-line units (the original form, for such had been the lines on Plenty Coups and the butterfly—I should have stayed with my first rhythmic impulse). The consistency of form in "On the Prairie" and the new "Shadow-hunter" suggested that they were parts of one longer poem.

If this were so, what was needed to join them? "The Shadow-hunter" was a primitive landscape; "On the Prairie," Minnesota as I saw it. What was missing was some dividing, historical incident . . . "Black Kettle Raises the Stars and Stripes." The massacre of the Indians at Sand Creek, although not in Minnesota, was the kind of crime that gave rise to our modern hatred of the "dark people," our fear of retribution. In bleeding them, we've bled ourselves . . . white. So in went "Black Kettle," as the crucial, dividing episode. I didn't try to shape "Black Kettle" into two-line units for the sake of conformity; the turbulent form of this section would mirror the violence it described, and separate distinctly the first, Indian part, from the concluding "white" section.

So the whole of "Indian Country" was written. Most important: I had answered the first question that a poet must ask himself: is this poem necessary? What had troubled me when I wrote "Black Kettle" was that I did not see why I was concerned with Indians. Was it merely dilettantism, in the manner of nineteenth-century poets—Tennyson, Longfellow—who picked a subject and exercised their powers on it, under no compulsion? Such poems are merely picturesque. I wasn't involved by any experience with Indians. I felt the same doubt in "The Shadow-hunter." But with "The Shadow-hunter" I had begun to suspect that my theme wasn't really the Indian, and when I wrote "On the Prairie," I realized that it wasn't. The whole of "Indian Country" arrived at the reason for writing it: my concern with the war against the unconscious, the dark people. This is not only an American preoccupation but also very much my own. The war of the white,

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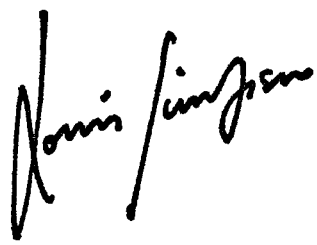
rational mind against the dark unconscious—that's what "Indian Country" is about. In Part One the dark self is in its own untouched world. In "Black Kettle" the dreaming unconscious is invaded by the white mind; the confrontation is bloody. In Part Three we have the result: the simple, practical life of the pioneers. The dreaming hills are hidden. Then the white farmers also vanish; they are replaced by their own machinery. Once more the landscape verges on mystery, as at the beginning . . . a cloud . . . a figure in a glass.



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The Poem as Defense

WYLIE SYPHER

I SHOULD LIKE TO DEAL with a matter that concerns the so-called two cultures, a matter more pressing than ever, now that we are living in a technological society—which is to say a society increasingly managed by technicians who try to deal with everything by their methods, their planning, their programs. The great danger in methodical planning is that it becomes official, and thus of necessity the technician easily becomes a bureaucrat. My proposal is simple: namely, that in the long run the best—perhaps the only—defense we have against the technical system, the official, the bureaucratic is the practice or the study of the arts. Those who are committed to the humanities should understand the deep and redemptive meaning of Wallace Stevens' axiom that poetry is "an unofficial view of being."

I came to this realization of our dire need for poetry while I was talking with an eminent Boston psychiatrist. When he learned what I teach, he asked with disconcerting and brutal directness, "Will you please tell me exactly what *is* the value of teaching literature?" I presume it is a question many scientists would ask, and one that has put us on the defensive since the days of Matthew Arnold and Thomas Henry Huxley. We are less than honest if we do not try to answer it. It is a question about the two cultures, and I should hope we can face it without the complacency of C. P. Snow or the venom of F. R. Leavis.

At once I should state as emphatically as I can that I myself have never regarded the two cultures as opposed. I was trained as a scientist, and I have always felt that there is no final incompati-

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bility between science, and poetry or painting. Indeed, I have believed Wordsworth correct in saying that whenever the scientist affects our daily impressions, the poet will be at his side to carry sensation into the heart of scientific discovery.

My concern is not the opposition between science and the arts but, instead, the opposition between our technologies and both science and the arts. For there is a practical difference between science and technology—however and whatever technology may contribute to science. Technology is employed to carry out programs, and programs are devised and managed by officials or bureaucrats. Not science, but technology, is dominating our culture, a danger that has roused the apprehension of thinkers like Herbert Marcuse and Jacques Ellul. I do not share their extreme alarm for reasons that will become clear; yet I recognize the menace of the technological frame of mind, which assumes that if we use the correct method, we can get the results we seek.

More frightening, by using an adequate method we can rule out the unexpected, and so accurately analyze and predict human behavior that even those who resist a certain program can be rendered ineffective in advance. Techniques, in brief, can absorb our very hostility to techniques because the technician has already calculated our resentment and provided for it in his program. Thus we can be stripped of choices, since the technician can deceive us into believing we are free when we are not. Jacques Ellul says that the supreme feat of the technician is to leave us entirely unaware of his techniques. This kind of technology is the ultimate in human engineering, for resistance to programs can be foretold, discounted beforehand, and thus accommodated to the program. The technologist dreads surprises. He must not be surprised. He predicts everything—and in a sense discovers nothing.

The psychologist calls this technique conditioning. For example, men recruited for duty on submarines carrying Polaris missiles are conditioned to live for months in a submerged vessel entirely cut off from every contact with our world, waiting at some unknown station deep under the sea watching for that red light. When the red light glows, they will know that their country has been blasted, and they will launch a missile more destructive than

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all the bombs dropped during the last war. When I asked a psychologist how these men could be so fully conditioned, he replied that the human being can be manipulated to endure anything, even the horror of concentration camps. He explained that the extreme of psychological adjustment is suicide: and he saw nothing strange in this notion. In an age when suicide is taken to be a final adjustment, we must indeed turn to Kafka—or William Burroughs —to comprehend what has happened to us.

Previous ages have had their techniques—what Arnold called instrument knowledge—but these techniques were only facets of their total culture. Then during the last century technism gradually spread from industry into life until our whole behavior is subject to our obsessive use of techniques. We have become so acquiescent to the ideal of efficiency that technology is our metaphysics. It has been said that man cannot live without the sacred: the computer may become our oracle; the statistician may be our *deus ex machina.* Ellul accuses us of technological anesthesia, since we are unconscious that human engineers are closing nearly all exits from the labyrinths designed by specialists. We are so numbed to the manipulation of our choices that public relations experts and marketing research can direct our desires and responses. Ellul remarks that madness alone remains inaccessible to this engineering.

In 1897 Paul Valéry foresaw our modern conquest by method. He defined method as an anonymous urgent science capable of being used by mediocre men as an instrument to control others. Valéry attributed German success to method, which he calls "the intensive cultivation of limited initiative." This discipline of method "provides a sure solution to every individual case." It rules out chance. Technism might be described as a conquest without surprise, or perhaps conclusion without risk. Valéry prophesied that we would move toward an era when method directs politics and life, an age mastered by average people with an ability to perform what can be duplicated. A method is not methodical unless it is repeatable. Repetition brings boredom; and I may add here that the artist is essentially a man who refuses to be bored—even in our society. Nor has the artist ever been successfully engineered. The rest of us have entered a paradise of efficiency where risk is

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reduced to a minimum and every contingency can be identified in advance.

The conquest by method began in the nineteenth century, which was much given to methodologies even in literature—not only the historical method and the scientific method, but the methods of realism, naturalism, symbolism, the methods of Balzac, Flaubert, Zola, and Pater's pure style, which was a brand of aesthetic technism. The symbolists believed their method could exclude Chance *(Hasard)* from poetry. Valéry was himself enchanted by Leonardo's method.

Without meaning to do so, T. S. Eliot brought into vogue a methodical notion that poetry is the exploitation of a medium, impersonal and diligently earned. Our recent novel has become methodological—witness the technical feats of Joyce, Gide and the new-wave fiction. Our drama is now an exercise in method, whether in Pirandello or Brecht or Artaud. The actor has devised his Method. The film has often lent itself to the technique of camera-work, as in *Marienbad.*

Meantime graduate students take courses in methods of literary research; nor do nonresearchers escape technism, since critics have put at their disposal methods for discriminating ambiguities, levels of meaning, tones, intentions. Anatomies of rhetoric, lexicons of signs and symbols have become all too available. One critic has offered a calculus to determine the attitude of the reader, the nature of poetic emotion, and the possible analogies of poetic statement.

I speak as if I denied the need for method in art, or as if criticism should be merely impressionistic. No. I hold fast to Aristotle's phrase that art is craft, a way of making, a *techné.* My plea is that methods should not become programmatic, that criticism should not become official, since the official is the pedantic. We should distrust any system whatever. The evil comes when method is used (or abused) technologically—that is, when it is beguiled by its own mechanism.

Then the technological frame of mind evades the possibility of surprise, the hazard in art, the grace beyond the reach of rule, the magic hand of chance. A poem arises from a disturbance we call life, yielding recognitions that are unexpected. In this sense art is

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almost our only refuge from the technological order where all can be calculated, formulated, regulated. Yeats speaks for the artist when he writes in his Diary, "Every note must come as a casual thought, then it will be my life." The poet guards the experience that is lived, that cannot be invaded by technicians. The poem may be highly traditional or formal; but it must be unofficial.

So when the psychiatrist asked me what value there is in teaching literature, I told him that the arts remain our best defense against the technological programs that benumb us. He did not understand. I might have quoted William Morris, who said, "You cannot educate, you cannot civilize men unless you can give them a share in art." For art, as Lewis Mumford once wrote, is more than ever the domain of the personal, and the personal is what cannot be predicted or duplicated with entire accuracy. Art is a domain that can still negate technology by surprise. In this sense art has always been unofficial, but the unofficial view of being has never been more needed than it now is.

How needed, how resistant, I can suggest by referring to one of the inspired books of our day which appeared in France in 1958: Gaston Bachelard's *Poetics of Space*. Bachelard, physicist as he was, justifies poetry as an answer to technologists who would foresee everything and engineer our lives by formulas. Bachelard shows that the private, personal encounter with being need not be abandoned in a technical era.

At a time when the science of outer space is thriving, Bachelard studies space as an inward and singular discovery or recognition, a poetry of earth that is never dead. In his *Poetics of Space* he contrasts space as it is known to the physicist with space as we live it in our daily experience. For Bachelard, as for John Keats, a thought can be fully validated only when it is proved upon our pulses. Bachelard is afflicted, he says, with a kind of topophilia—an acute sensitivity to the personal spaces in which we exist, the sensations of space as it is felt within the house, within the cellar or attic; the space inside a drawer is not the space inside a seashell or the convolution of the snail's life, the space of the miniature, the satisfaction of roundness. He calls this poetry topoanalysis, and if it is madness, he says, it is one of the most delicate aberrations of the mind. Bachelard is, incidentally, much indebted to Thoreau's experience,

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for some of the finest topoanalysis was done at Walden. Thoreau discovers the inherent poetry of space when he writes, "A lake is the landscape's most beautiful and expressive feature. It is earth's eye; looking into which the beholder measures the depth of his own nature."

Earlier, Wordsworth discovered in the Valley of the Wye a geography that is lived in the blood and felt along the heart:

> . . . all the mighty world
> Of eye, and ear,—both what they half create,
> And what perceive.

Here is a personal conquest of local space no geometer can make; these poetic areas of experience cannot be measured by physicist or surveyor. Our lived spaces are the very topology of our existence: our hands still feel the latch of doors we first opened; and D. H. Lawrence was always rebelling against the sordid confines of the midlands. Proust lived in this kind of space, known only as uneven paving stones, and his turns on the way to Meséglises. Walter Pater was another who sensed that the house where we were children remains inscribed in consciousness. Such spaces the architect never blueprinted, the mason never built. Bachelard notes that it is harder to live poetically *in* an apartment: elevators have done away with the heroism of climbing stairs, the triumph of mounting near the sky. We no longer fear the madness that is buried within the dark walls of the cellar, with its manic terrifying space. Robert Frost dredged into this space in *The Witch of Coos.* But Frost also found terror in the attic.

Thus Bachelard searches out the meaning of contours we have lived. And Ruskin saw the Greek mind embodied in the classic landscape of the pastoral, just as the medieval self is embodied in the safely enclosed garden, bounded by its moat. Doubtless, the lived topography of Dante's Inferno, Purgatorio and Paradiso is the most intensely realized landscape of the human spirit. Amiel spoke of a landscape as a state of soul, and Wordsworth's sunset glory is a human loss.

In Browning's remarkable poem, "Two in the Campagna," the need to surrender to someone else phrases itself as a spatial recognition: the yearning to yield the self in passion and silence, peace

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and joy, is written *in* the yellow fennel branching from the bricks, in weeds "where one small orange cup amassed/ Five beetles—blind and green" groping for honey meal beneath that open ancient Roman sky. Here the wasteland itself with its endless fleece of grass brings to the lover a sense of union that is gone in a moment; but for the moment there is the pain of infinite desire in finite hearts. So, too, Arnold's estrangement from Marguerite appears in the islands parted by the salt unchanging sea.

These spatial responses are poetic, not scientific, simply because the scientist uses another kind of attention. The scientist must repeat his observation if it is to be verified. In scientific experience "the first time doesn't count." By the time the observation is again confirmed, it is no longer new. In a marvelously poetic vein Bachelard remarks, "In scientific work we have first to digest our surprise." The poet, not the scientist, is one who can trust his first vision, before the recognition is endorsed by duplicating it, before it is codified into ideas, theories, laws.

As Bachelard says, the poet is always living on "the threshold of being"—"he has no past." The images of art are unpredictable and unrepeatable, and thus liberating. They validate the instant. The artistic response is an unexpected increase of life, a surprise that keeps consciousness from becoming "somnolent" or routine. The poet, then, has a privilege which the scientist, as scientist, must forego: the poet's world is forever new. His recognitions may be disturbing, for they are not yet crystallized into explanations. We hardly need be reminded of Keats's spatial experience in first reading Chapman's Homer:

> Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
> When a new planet swims into his ken.

This first time the astronomer feels his wild surmise he is a poet, and the poetry in science is this instant of revelation or epiphany. Then his discovery must be *reduced* before it is reliable science. So Bachelard describes science as a way of organizing our disappointments under the guise of knowledge. Knowledge in scientific form is coherent disillusion, a sacrifice of discoveries to concepts and systems, a loss of an epiphany.

For this reason psychology works *outside* human experience as

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we live it, moment by moment, if we are at a height of consciousness. The poet exists more than most of us at this height of consciousness, like Hamlet's. Hamlet's experience is naïve, since Hamlet has a talent for being continually surprised. His behavior cannot be programmed. That is why Hamlet's life is a mode of art. Any consistent or schematic account of Hamlet's responses—according to the Oedipal complex, say—psychologizes his drama out of being; it surrenders the living experience for a rational explanation. By that time we have dispelled the magic, the wild surmises by which the young prince lives.

Bachelard calls poetic attention a magnifying glass. Poetry is a means of seeing a world in a grain of sand. Tragedy is life written in miniscule, a miniature that accepts the unexpected. For art sanctions the reality of the single intense perception, and the poet's technique is a way of experimenting that is open to the indecisive, the expansion of things infinite.

The phrase is Baudelaire's, but I do not think I understood Baudelaire's poems on horizons until I read Bachelard's pages on the word *vast*. This poetic space does not belong to the outside world at all; it is the terrain of dreams, its expansion inward—not psychological, but psychic, like the serene fatality of Mallarmé's empty azure sky. Bachelard speaks of poetry as the appearance of an image in wholly unexpected form, an image that touches the depths before it breaks the surface to arise in a zone that supports language. The lived quality of a poetic image gives it presence, for a poem "liquidates" the past the moment it is written.

Can you see why I say that our only, or our best, defense against technology and human engineering is art? It is a resistance critics can seldom make, since critics often try to exclude the unpredictable in behalf of their explanations. A good many critics and, I fear, teachers are eager to assign official meanings. But the poem, like the first observation of the scientist, opens unexpected possibilities. The poem transcends its own techniques because it is a recognition we could not predict. So the authenticity of a work of art usually can be judged by the unexpectedness of its direction of discovery.

Above all we should not resign ourselves to official or classified notions, to our various definitions of the novel, of tragedy, of

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comedy, of epic and lyric, of plot and motivation. And we should not assume that a new method is a bad method.

Once a student asked me what I thought an artist's first task should be in our society. My answer must have seemed romantic or irresponsible: I said the artist's first vocation, now, is resistance. I gave this reply sadly, for resistance may become freakishness, frivolity, insolence or anarchy. Yet today's poet, novelist or painter must refuse as best he can the technological schemes that would dominate or dehumanize us, depriving us of unexpected choices.

Robbe-Grillet has said that the novel must use ordinary objects to lead us to an unaccustomed world—a world that refuses to conform to our usual habits and demands. Ionesco's plays are babble; but they make us hear our own babble. One of the insolent acts of painting is Pop art, inviting us to *see* what we are advertising and buying. All the Pop artist asks us to do is to look. If we query him about what his painting means, he tells us that soup cans mean nothing more than soup cans. Nevertheless, when he paints American flags (which mean nothing more than American flags) he makes us see, perhaps, what the United States Office of Information cannot afford to recognize, or to have us recognize.

It is hard to have to justify Pop art, William Burroughs, Happenings and computer poetry, for such art is reckless to the degree of insolence. It is an insolence that can be justified only by recognizing that our society is even more colossally insolent in attempting to engineer human beings.

We may regret the artist's insolence. But we should be wise enough to know that we must stand with the artist on a frontier of resistance to official programs. In resisting, of course, we must distinguish between the official and the traditional. The official is the programmatic; the traditional is not. And everywhere mere programs are being substituted for traditions. In fact, a program might be called a devalued and unscrupulous form of tradition. We can make conquests by programs—and yet they are false conquests. The conquest by the artist is different. Bernard Berenson was right, after all, when he wrote that art is a conquest gained only by a moment of personal discovery. The poet is forever helping us defend this precious moment of our being.

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REPORT FROM PARIS

De Gaulle: Which Way to the Future?

WAVERLEY ROOT

For some weeks now, the prophets of Paris have been predicting a major change in General Charles de Gaulle's foreign policy. "Conditions today appear more favorable than ever for a great diplomatic turning point," wrote Georges Broussine, a journalist with pipelines running into Gaullist inner circles. Raymond Tournoux, author of *Secrets of State,* long reputed the closest to the Elysée Palace of all French journalists, said in the mass-circulation weekly, *Match:* "With any other statesman than the President of the Republic, the time would have come to speak of a reversal of alliances. According to Gaullist doctrine, alliances are by their very nature seasonal." Georges Altschuler, editor-in-chief of what many persons consider the best-informed independent radio station of France, Europe No. 1, who is personally inclined to regard Gaullism with benevolence, and France's most respected newspaper, *Le Monde,* which is not, have both raised the spectre of a "reversal of alliances."

But responsible French politicians will not admit that France is contemplating a change of orientation. "A characteristic of French policy is its continuity," a very high-ranking official told me. "General de Gaulle is pursuing the same principles he has always followed." Yet many listeners thought they heard new notes in two major French policy statements in July. The first was the speech delivered at the Brussels meeting of the Common Market ministers on July 10 by Foreign Minister Maurice Couve de Murville, on the subject of British entry into the European Economic Community. The second was the declaration made by General de Gaulle July 13 at Bonn, on the occasion of his annual visit there for the top-level consultations called for by the Franco-German treaty of cooperation.

The new elements in both these utterances were concerned with questions of dimension. Couve de Murville argued that the admission to the European Community of Great Britain, together with certain states that would inevitably follow her—first of all, Ireland, Norway and Denmark—would make the Common Market not only bigger but different. "A Hegelian theory," said Karl Schiller, West Germany's Social Democratic Minister of Economy—for it was Hegel who enunciated the principle that above a certain level an increase in quantity results in a change in character. De Gaulle was perhaps being Hegelian, too, when he warned the Germans that the overwhelming power of the United States would make for American domination of the world whether the United States wants it that way or not.

This statement underlined one of the two new situations that the French believe they have recognized and that presumably they will meet with new tactics, even though the principles those tactics serve remain the same. This is an upset in the world balance of power. "There are no longer two super-powers," a high-ranking French diplomat told me, "there is only one—the United States. After that, we have a great power, the Soviet Union. There is another burgeoning great power, China, but that is a factor with which we need not reckon immediately."

The other new situation that the French believe they see is the increasing danger of another world war—nuclear war. One source close to de Gaulle told me that the General is "highly pessimistic" about the chances for maintaining peace. Another described him only as "concerned," adding that even during the Middle East crisis, de

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Gaulle continued to consider the Vietnam war as the most imminent threat to world peace.

It is not too strong to describe de Gaulle's preoccupation with these two situations as obsessions. He is obsessed with the danger of war and he is obsessed with the increasing power of the United States. This is what is new in the French diplomatic world. French objectives remain the same, but countering these two tendencies takes priority over everything else. It is the emphasis that has changed. The tempo and intensity of activity in the affected areas has been stepped up. De Gaulle's most unpopular recent positions—both somewhat apart from the mainstream of foreign policy—are explicable in the light of these obsessions. The stand on the Middle East crisis reflected the obsession with war. The incitation of Quebec reflected the obsession with American domination. Tactics and strategy may alter under the pressure of these concerns, but principles remain the same.

The basic principle is the maintenance of French independence of action, so far as any nation can act independently in our complicatedly intermeshed world. De Gaulle is already credited, by his admirers at least, with having achieved considerable progress in this direction. "We have our hands free," the Gaullists assert. "We have our hands empty," the anti-Gaullists retort. Which raises the question: suppose there were to be a great turning point in French diplomacy, would that matter?

Many observers think it would not. An extremely high-ranking American diplomat has expressed the opinion that de Gaulle's international actions have been making France "irrelevant" on the world scene, and critics in France have complained that he is "isolating" the country. Yet the steady stream of political leaders, ministers, chiefs of government and chiefs of state who come to Paris to consult de Gaulle hardly supports the theory of isolation. Few statesmen make the trip to Washington from Europe, Asia or Africa without stopping in Paris either going or coming—Russia's Alexei Kosygin did it both ways.

As for irrelevance, many of the newspapers that proclaim the impotence and the unimportance of de Gaulle's words and acts deny their own dogma by breaking out into a rash of headlines whenever he raises his voice. One may be excused, therefore, for wondering if the judgment of irrelevance is not an example of wishful thinking. For those to whom the General's ideas represent an obstacle to the achievement of their own objectives, it is comforting to regard them as the idiosyncracies of one man, without echo elsewhere. But even though his popularity may seem at the moment to be declining in his own country—it has dropped and subsequently recovered before—de Gaulle still retains terrific personal prestige in Europe. There are pro-American or pro-British groups in various European countries, but no one talks about Johnsonists or Wilsonists. There are Gaullists in other countries, however badly the label may fit—as in Germany.

Many factions in other European countries agree with the General on some of the positions that gall the United States—the left-wing British Laborites on Vietnam, for instance—although their governments consider it politic to give at least lip service to the theories of the world's strongest nation. If there were no other reason than the very natural human rebelliousness at being constrained to follow the lead of others whose force they dare not provoke, however tactful the wielders of that force may try to be, the General would have an audience in Europe as the symbol of resistance to power, admired and envied by those who wish they could emulate his example.

Europe is not indifferent about what France may choose to do. For the other nations of the Continent, French policy has relevance, whether they approve it or disapprove it. In the context of European politics as a whole, which is to say in the context of world politics, it is important to perceive whether or not France is shifting gears. She could prove to be the pacemaker. "By carrying on an independent policy, France serves as an example to the rest of the world," one of her leading representatives told me recently. "By carrying

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on an independent policy, France risks destroying European cooperation and Atlantic security," some oppositionists would put it. But that is important too. So it is worthwhile to take stock of French policy and attempt to discern what changes, if any, are to be expected in the near future.

A Reversal of Alliances?

Until fairly recently, French official pronouncements have reflected the view that world strength is more or less equally divided between two great powers, the United States and the Soviet Union. In order to avoid being dominated by one or the other, French policy had been directed toward the creation of a "third force," in which European countries would be united in a coalition strong enough to stand up against either, and perhaps even to call the plays itself by its ability on any specific issue to throw its weight in whatever direction European interests might dictate.

This formula is now considered outdated because the United States has outstripped Russia so decisively. "Ranted at by China," wrote law professor Maurice Duverger in the *Nouvel Observateur,* "paralyzed in Vietnam, defeated morally in the Middle East, losing ground in Latin America, the Soviet Union is outclassed everywhere by the United States, which is marching with long strides toward a world hegemony."

De Gaulle himself stressed this situation at Bonn. "At the base of everything," he said, "there is one fact which seems to dominate the realities: that is the enormous American power. In what I say, there is no hostility nor any aversion toward our American friends. The United States has become the greatest power and it will be led automatically to extend its power. I do not mean to dominate, but to exercise a preponderant action, that is to say, a hegemony over the others."

"The directing idea of the General's policy," one of his aides told me, "is that international life is dominated by the fact that the United States is becoming more and more powerful. How can we organize international life in the face of this fact? What can France's role be in the world? She has ceased to be a top-rank power, but she is still sufficiently important to have her own policy, to be herself. We are therefore trying to be as independent as possible. We have no quarrel with the United States, but we do not want to become vassals, nor for that matter do any Europeans, though the means chosen to escape this fate differ. Great Britain has chosen to fall in behind the United States and to attempt to influence her actions from within. We have preferred to try to influence them from without."

From this it is clear that of her two possible choices—to accept the Pax Americana and act within the limits it permits, or, as the ancient Gauls combatted (unsuccessfully) the Pax Romana, to resist being swallowed up within it—the French have chosen the second. De Gaulle so described France's policy at Bonn. "There are two possibilities," he said. "We could accept things as they are. That is the easiest possibility, to become part of a whole which American power will dominate. And then there is the second possibility, and I say this without any hostility toward the United States, that is to safeguard our national personality."

Does resistance to becoming part of a whole that American power will dominate create an obligation to become part of another whole that Soviet power would dominate? This would hardly safeguard the national personality either. Yet Alfred Grosser, German-born professor of the Institute of Political Studies, wrote in *Le Monde:* "In spite of its apparent variations, the foreign policy of General de Gaulle has never ceased to be based on the same fundamental principle"—that is, independence. "In spite of its permanence, the positions of the last few weeks reveal a change of orientation doubtless due . . . to the excessive importance attached to . . . the power of the United States . . . Today it seems that France must become the friend of the USSR solely because the United States is too powerful."

This recalls the classic British policy of the past of supporting whichever of the two leading European powers was the weaker in

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order to prevent the stronger from uniting the whole Continent against England—as Napoleon and Hitler so nearly did. According to this reasoning, France might be expected to add her weight to that of the Soviet Union, along with the weight of the rest of Western Europe, if she can bring the other Western Europeans along. Is it likely that the desire to restore the shattered balance of power in this fashion would induce her to secede completely from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and make instead a comparable treaty with Moscow—a genuine reversal of alliances?

"Nonsense," said an authoritative French spokesman. "The General's dominating desire is national independence. It would make no sense for him to jump out of the American frying pan into the Soviet fire. Why should he exchange dependence on the United States for dependence on Russia? There will be no alliance with the Soviet Union, there will be no reversal of alliances."

"It is not a question of a reversal of alliances," wrote Maurice Duverger, "it is a question of co-existence of alliances."

"I would amend that," an American diplomat said, "to make it a question of non-existence of alliances."

How far is France prepared to move toward Russia? If not to a treaty of alliance, then perhaps to a treaty of nonaggression? "No," said a Frenchman in a position to speak with authority. "What real significance do treaties of nonaggression have?" Then to organized periodic meetings at ministerial or summit levels, like those held between France and Germany? "We already have meetings between technicians and experts," a spokesman pointed out, "but they have not been institutionalized." "It is not easy to talk with the Russians, even at the present levels," another said. "We send bankers, industrialists, economists, engineers to the meetings. The Russians, however their representatives may be labelled, send state servants, acting according to political directives, with the full power of their government behind them. It's not an even match."

Would France sit down with Russia, and the other states of Eastern and Western Europe, in a pan-European security conference, to which the United States would not be invited? The possibility was hinted at after the Franco-German meeting in Bonn, and again during de Gaulle's recent visit to Poland. Professional French diplomats do not sound enthusiastic about it. "Convoking such a conference doesn't depend only on us," one of them said. "The others have to be ready too." "We don't look upon such international meetings as a means of initiating projects," another put it. "We think they are only useful after diplomatic negotiations have already established a certain degree of harmony on objectives and provided a likelihood of success."

What would a European security conference be about? First of all, the achievement of a durable status for Germany that neither Germans nor anyone else would be likely to try to alter later by force of arms. The French view is that the safest status is a reunification of Germany. As long as the prewar country remains split into two parts, they argue, they will strain to come together again. For the moment, the forces holding this tendency in check are stronger than the strain, so the status quo is not immediately threatened. But the tension remains, and it will become operative whenever a weakness develops in European stability, that is to say, automatically at the most dangerous moment.

At Bonn, de Gaulle toasted "Germany as a whole," a public profession of the French belief that the best foundation for peace in Europe is the reunification of a Germany that Paris sees as redeemed from the sins of Nazism and Prussianism. But to achieve reunification, whether by de Gaulle's formula of "*détente, entente* and cooperation" or by some other means, mutual trust and a will to agree have to exist among the countries concerned. The French report that on the German side they have encountered a more cooperative attitude on the part of the present government than was manifested by any of its predecessors. They claim, perhaps too optimistically, to have sensed some progress toward a spirit of reconciliation on the Soviet side too, but admit that Russia

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is very slow about ridding herself of suspiciousness about the Germans. But in Poland, stony resistance met all de Gaulle's efforts to persuade his hosts that it is safe to permit the reunification of Germany and dangerous not to. Still sharply etched in Polish minds is the memory of the terrible German invasion of 1939 and the even more terrible occupation that followed it. For the Poles, the enemy has been dismembered and safety lies in keeping him so. De Gaulle was unable to shake this conviction. "If the criterion of international political life is the will of peoples," de Gaulle said in Poland, "then a divided Germany does not meet the conditions. This is an abnormal situation which must be solved." "For Poland, the existence of the German Democratic Republic [East Germany] is a fundamental guarantee of her security," a Polish spokesman replied. De Gaulle tried again. At Danzig, he said, "France has no advice to give to Poland," and then proceeded to give her some. France hopes, he said, that Poland "will see a little farther, a little wider, than you have been obliged to do up to now. If you do this, if your vision becomes farsighted and broad, obstacles which today appear insurmountable, you will, without any doubt, surmount. We French are ourselves engaged in doing this. There are obstacles which we have learned how to surmount because the future wills it so. You understand what I mean."

They did indeed. Speaking to the Diet, de Gaulle touched discreetly again on this question: "France, who, like Poland, is a neighbor of this great country [Germany] and has throughout her history, especially in this very century, suffered gravely from German ambition, is nevertheless undertaking, after the collapse of the Reich and now that Germany has repudiated its misdeeds, to achieve with her neighbor across the Rhine frank relationships of reconciliation." And he expressed the hope that France and Poland might follow this path "side by side." The answer of Wladislav Gomulka, secretary-general of the single Polish political party, was an almost brutal refusal to follow France toward German reunification: "The social and ideological differences existing between the countries of our continent do not threaten to destroy peace. What threatens peace are the aspirations which tend to erase the results of the common victory gained over the Third Reich by the anti-Hitlerite coalition, along with the claims made with a view to changing the territorial status quo in Europe."

It does not look as if the European security conference is for tomorrow.

With the German question still an irremovable stumbling block, the modalities and possibilities for a French—or Western European—rapprochement with the Soviet Union remain vague and undefined. "All we want is to normalize our relations with Russia," one French diplomat said. "We are exploring the possibilities in the East rather than aiming at the moment for anything specific and positive," said another. "We want to pursue the *détente* [the thaw] farther than ever before," said a third.

The pursuit of a *détente* with Russia is not regarded as exclusive. Franch diplomacy views with favor the development of a Russo-American *détente* also—with one important reservation, which is shared by several other European countries. That is that it does not take the form of a Russo-American accord that will settle the fate of European countries over their heads in a second Yalta. This explains why France is pushing her own *détente* efforts so hard now, to establish circumstances that will forestall this development, during the opportunity presented to her by the war in Vietnam, which inhibits the development of Russo-American cooperation. It was probably observation of de Gaulle's exploitation of this opportunity that led economics professor Raymond Aron to write in *Le Figaro* that "he talks and acts as if he preferred the continuation of the conflict to a compromise, as if he desired peace less than an American defeat, as if he feared above all a Russo-American accord." The idea that de Gaulle does not really want the war to end was first suggested, gingerly, by ex-Premier Pierre Mendès-France in the *Nouvel Observateur*. Senator Robert Kennedy was of this opinion too after he had seen de Gaulle—but, also, it is important to

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note, after he had seen Mendès-France. It is difficult for anyone familiar with the extent to which de Gaulle is worried about the possibility of another World War, and with his opinion that the conflict in Vietnam constitutes the gravest danger for peace, to accept the thesis that for any reason whatever he would want to see the hostilities prolonged one moment longer than is necessary. His view of what the outcome of such a war might be was expressed to Kosygin. "If America and Russia come to blows," he said, "the victor will be China."

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization

The official French position on NATO remains at this writing that France is still a member of the political organization known as the North Atlantic Alliance, which pledges its members to consult on action (not to act automatically) in case of an aggression against any of them, although she has withdrawn from the military superstructure set up by the Alliance which might react more or less automatically to a threat. She thus insures herself against being drawn willy-nilly into a war that she might consider contrary to the interests of France and of Europe.

The North Atlantic Treaty comes up for revision or renewal in 1969. Will France then elect to leave the political as well as the military organization of NATO?

On July 10, Georges Broussine, whose contacts with Gaullist theoreticians are well known, predicted that she will. In official circles, it was promptly denied that any decision had been taken on this point. This is undoubtedly true. Many things could happen between now and the renewal date that might alter the situation; and it is de Gaulle's habitual strategy to leave all political options open until the last moment. He does not take an irrevocable step until he has to. It is worth noting, however, that the denials were not accompanied by any assertion that a decision has been taken to stay in NATO; and the very same persons who protest that France, meaning de Gaulle, has not made up her mind about what to do in 1969 admit that complete withdrawal from NATO would be a result consistent with present French thinking about this organization.

Why would France withdraw from NATO? First, because it is no longer necessary. At Bonn, de Gaulle spoke of "America, our natural ally, with whom we want to maintain our alliance as long as the threat subsists." The last phrase, which had already appeared in one of de Gaulle's press conferences, is a joker. De Gaulle believes the threat has already virtually ceased to exist, and he is not alone in that view. The Alliance was set up against the Soviet Union, then considered as a likely aggressor. But "the idea that Russia is ready to pounce is outdated," one important French diplomat said to me. "Russia has changed," said an even more important one. "She is no longer expansionist or aggressive. The last threats from her direction were in Berlin and Cuba. It is not likely that there will be any more. The Russians dread a confrontation with the United States. In short, the elements of the cold war have disappeared." De Gaulle himself is supposed to have said, "The cold war is over, but the Americans haven't noticed it."

It is also the consensus within NATO itself that the Russian threat has dwindled to the vanishing point, although occasional public utterances brandish it again, possibly to encourage appropriations from the legislatures of the nations that support it. All organizations, once established, resist dissolution, and NATO's reaction to realization that its military usefulness has become questionable has been an attempt to shift to a political role to provide itself with a new *raison d'être*. The question on which the most stress was put at the December 1966 meeting of the NATO ministers was East-West relations. But the more NATO tends to become a political body, the more surely will continued membership in it become repugnant to de Gaulle. Broussine describes the Alliance as "partly a defensive alliance. . .and in addition a purely political organization of cooperation and coordination. Thus, to the degree in which it is dominated by the most powerful of its members, it is becoming the political instrument of that member." De Gaulle's

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present preoccupation with the increasing power of the United States, and his opposition to it, should logically impel him to quit a political group doomed to serve the interests of the United States.

Broussine also bases his prediction of a complete French withdrawal from NATO on the theory widely held in Europe that the United States herself will withdraw progressively from the continent. "Specialists foresee that in 1969 there will remain no more than a single American combat division on German soil. . .Tactical atomic arms will gradually be withdrawn from the center of Europe. . .This will end in a sort of American military disengagement from Europe." A French diplomat backed Broussine up. "The United States," he said, "is diminishing her military participation in Europe."

What does this imply? First, that if the attack from Russia that nobody expects should nevertheless take place, it will not catch enough American soldiers on the spot to insure immediate automatic American entrance into the war. Whether or not the United States will come to the aid of Western Europe will thereafter have to depend on a deliberate decision taken by the American administration of the moment, whose nature no one can foresee. That decision, the French feel, will not be made on the basis of the existence of a treaty. It will be made on the basis of American interests. If America decides that her own security demands that she defend Western Europe, she will launch her rocket-borne nuclear arms, treaty or no treaty. If she decides that it is contrary to her own interests to become involved, she will not launch them, treaty or no treaty. The Alliance has thus become superfluous.

But the French go even farther. They hold that NATO is not only useless, but harmful. They consider that the system of two heavily armed hostile blocs, glaring at each other across the continent of Europe, keeps alive the danger of a conflict desired by nobody. An accident can always happen when there are explosives about. "All the conditions required for a world conflict have been brought together," de Gaulle is reported to have said recently. "All that is lacking is a spark."

In these circumstances, French policy is directed at breaking down the mutually threatening blocs—and this goes for both halves of Europe. French diplomats rejoice at the growing independence of the Eastern European states from Moscow, and de Gaulle encouraged the Poles to assert their own separate identity during his recent visit to Poland to an extent that could not have been welcome to the Soviet Union. He did so by implication when he spoke, not of cooperation between East and West, but "between the west, the center and the east of Europe." He planted an insidious poisoned barb when he said at Warsaw: "What I want you to feel is that France has always desired a Poland; others have not always desired it"—a recall of Russian participation in the various partitions of Poland. He compared Poland and France as countries both of which had to look to safeguarding their substance, "whatever may be the weight of the colossi of the universe," a discreet suggestion that Poland should exercise the same independence within the Warsaw Pact that France is exercising within the Atlantic Pact. He abandoned discretion when he warned Poland against "absorption by some enormous foreign apparatus," a phrase that disappeared from the Polish press agency's text of the de Gaulle address at the University of Kraków, where it was uttered.

Gomulka, in the speech to the Polish Diet that followed de Gaulle's, rejected the advice to loosen ties with Russia. "Friendship and alliance with our great neighbor to the East, the Soviet Union," he said, "is the keystone of the policy of the Popular Republic of Poland and the principal guarantee of her security." This was the public attitude. The private attitude may be divined from the fact that the texts of de Gaulle's speeches had been submitted to the Polish government beforehand (as Gomulka's had been submitted to de Gaulle), and he was not asked to eliminate the references to independence from Russia. The French semiofficial reaction to what on the surface looks like complete

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failure to shake Poland on either of the two primary objectives de Gaulle had set for himself—to secure acceptance of German reunification, to wedge Poland away from Russia—is, "The seeds of these ideas have been planted, and they will grow." This remains to be seen. But the soil in which they have been planted is fertile. Polish antagonism to Russia is centuries old and still shows itself cautiously in minute symbols (for instance, through the Polish diplomat who whispered into my ear as he offered me a glass of vodka at an embassy reception, "Polish vodka is better than Russian"). Next spring, de Gaulle visits Romania, and here the soil is fertile too. Romania appears already as the leading dissident among what used to be indisputably the Soviet satellite states.

On the other side of the European dividing line, France has been able to act more directly to break up the Western bloc by her own aloofness from NATO. Will this precipitate a general breakdown of NATO by encouraging others to enter "the path which in General de Gaulle's opinion they should follow," as Broussine puts it?

Would others follow France out of NATO? It is not considered unthinkable in Paris. Belgium, which accepted with reluctance the transferred NATO headquarters that some editorialists predicted would make the country the target for any eventual attack, was significantly the country that last December drafted a resolution which if it had been accepted in its original form would have called for the creation within NATO of a separately organized European armed force—a possible nucleus for an independent, purely European army capable of some day cutting loose from NATO. The Belgian resolution was quickly watered down to meaninglessness, but the fact that the idea was broached at all, especially from this quarter, was a major symptom of dissatisfaction with the present NATO formula.

A secession which, after that of France, would probably deal the death blow to NATO, would be that of Germany. Is this development conceivable? There are diplomats here who think it is. They point out that Germany has been disgruntled by many aspects of her relations with the United States, in some cases because American diplomacy has been lacking in tact or subtlety—by the high rate of fatal accidents in American-provided planes, by American pressure for continued German purchases of more American arms than Germany felt she could afford or could use, by withdrawals of American troops from Germany or replacement of well-trained men, needed in Vietnam, by less efficient soldiers, and by a succession of transparent schemes designed to give Germany the illusion of participating in control of nuclear arms without granting her the reality.

The nuclear arms question is regarded as a particularly delicate one, capable of provoking strained relations between the United States and Germany. The French, who are no more anxious than Americans to see their traditional adversary equipped with atomic weapons, have consistently opposed such American devices as the stillborn multilateral force and the later so-called "McNamara committee" on the sharing of atomic control. The Germans, the French think, are perfectly capable of seeing through the deceptive nature of the participation offered them, which will not sate their appetite for nuclear arms, as seems to be the American hope, but whet it. The Germans disclaim all desire for atomic weapons, but is that disclaimer sincere, or if sincere, will it remain permanent? It is remarked here that the German resistance to an agreement on nonproliferation of atomic weapons may not rest only on the objections raised openly to certain details of the project—the system of control, for instance—but on a basic reluctance to abandon permanently the right to produce nuclear arms, as Germany is presently forbidden to do by treaty.

This ties in with the question of German reunification, which might provide the stimulus for a return of German aggressiveness. When the French inserted the adjective "unprovoked" before the word "aggression" in the definition of circumstances that might call for military counteraction by NATO, they aroused apprehension

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among Americans who thought this referred to Vietnam. Actually, the French were thinking primarily not of Vietnam, but of Germany. They feared that Germany might in some future circumstances be tempted to use force in an attempt to bring her separated territories together again, by some act that would oblige NATO to come to her support. Similarly, the French think the German resistance to giving up nuclear arms for good and all may depend partly on a desire to keep in reserve the possibility of resorting to the pressure of the possession of atomic weapons to secure reunification if other means fail—an idea that may owe something to the French example. "The great economic power which is the Federal Republic," wrote Alfred Grosser in *Le Monde,* "cannot be led to renounce atomic power except on the basis of hope for reunification: renouncement is acceptable as the price to pay for progress toward the unity of the German people; if this unity appears to be ruled out, permanent renunciation becomes improbable."

For this and other reasons, a German disillusionment with NATO and American leadership must be considered as possible. The French point out one very significant indication of the evolution of German thinking on European defense. It is evident that if multinational European defense organized within NATO disappears because NATO itself has disappeared, some other multinational European defense force must replace it: and Germany at the July Bonn meeting agreed to Franco-German talks on security in 1970—the year after the NATO treaty comes up for renewal. In fact, Germany not only agreed, but, according to a very high French authority, it was Bonn which took the initiative of requesting that these discussions be opened. The conclusion drawn is that if Germany wants to talk about new security arrangements in 1970, it is because she is envisaging the possibility that security through NATO will break down in 1969—possibly by her own act.

According to Broussine, France is envisaging a very ambitious—some might say unattainable—system of European security. This is the replacement of NATO and the Warsaw Pact by a European security organization of both western and eastern countries, guaranteed by the United States and the Soviet Union, neither of which would be members. In this exact form, such an objective seems inherently improbable. The grouping of eastern and western European states is not inconsistent with the discernible tendency to establish more numerous and more intimate links with Eastern Europe, but a guarantee from the United States would be contradictory to de Gaulle's efforts to get America out of Europe, and nonmembership for Russia does not accord with the long-standing concept of a Europe united "from the Atlantic to the Urals," a phrase that de Gaulle repeated in Poland after a long interval during which it had not been heard. In the numerous conversations I have had lately with French diplomats, politicians and experts, this idea was never echoed.

The Common Market and the Future of Europe

The development of the Common Market as an economic unit may be described as gratifying; its evolution as a political unit has been less successful. France wants to create European unity in international action, among a group of European states thinking along European lines and devoted to supporting European interests, as differentiated from transatlantic interests. But she wants to do so on a basis of retention of national sovereignty by each member, whose governments would make their decisions in "concert"—a favorite word with de Gaulle just now. This idea has made little headway so far against opposition, spearheaded by the Netherlands, from the proponents of supranationality, who would set up an international parliament for the Common Market and endow it with a powerful executive to whose directives the separate national governments would have obligated themselves to conform. The other most urgent political issue of the Common Market, the entry of Great Britain into the European Community, is not unrelated to

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the first, for British participation would, of course, influence the nature of whatever political content the organization manages to give itself; but in this respect French obstruction to the British entry seems inconsistent. Britain is as much opposed to supranationality as France is, not at all inclined to surrender any of her own sovereignty to an international organization. If this were the only consideration, France might be expected to welcome the British, as allies in the campaign to develop the E.E.C. into a political union of sovereign states.

If France has taken just the opposite attitude, it is for another reason. Britain is unwelcome because the essence of the Common Market, in the French view, should be its "European" character, and Britain is not sufficiently "European." This means that she is too closely tied to the United States and would bring into the Common Market the transatlantic influence that de Gaulle wants to keep out of it. Up to now, a hope has always been held out for the future: if Britain becomes converted, if she embraces the European faith and puts European interests first, then she will be worthy to be admitted to the fold. In recent months, it has been possible to wonder if she were not going to make the grade. She has loudly protested her "Europeanism"; she has entered into projects of practical cooperation with France and other Common Market countries, some of which rule out alternative projects with the United States (the Franco-British supersonic Concorde plane, for instance); and she has lately been asserting her willingness to abide by the terms of the Treaty of Rome which established the Common Market without demanding, as she formerly did, abrogations which she felt were required by her relations with the other countries of the British Commonwealth. France seemed to be making progress in what had looked like a long campaign to Europeanize Britain, which started several years ago with a needling about the brain drain of British scientists and technicians to the United States. But it was just at the moment when she seemed possibly within reach of the goal, as *Le Monde* pointed out editorially, that Couve de Murville once more pulled the rug out from under Britain's feet in his Brussels speech, which to some sounded like a definitive barring of Britain, "European" or not.

Did this mean that the promise to Britain of admission to the E.E.C. if she purges herself of transatlanticism has been withdrawn? It did not seem so from the statement made by de Gaulle at Bonn a few days later, which reiterated the familiar position. "If Britain becomes one day, as we may hope, what we are ourselves, that is to say really European," he said, "European in her way of living, in the procurement of her food, in her monetary system, in her movements of capital, in her world situation, in her relations with the Commonwealth, in her relations with the United States—and that is essential—in short, if Great Britain becomes really European, there is no reason why she should not be in our Community."

Is it possible that de Gaulle thought he could safely say this because he was laying down conditions that could not be met, like those that in fairy stories place seemingly insurmountable obstacles before the prince who wants to win the princess's hand? The prince always does win, however, and so may Great Britain. Actually, if those close to de Gaulle are correct, he does not think that Britain can be kept out indefinitely. He is said to have two convictions on this point. The first is that Britain has no alternative except to join the Common Market, to which the corollary is that there is no point in making concessions to her since she has to accept whatever price the Common Market chooses to put on admission. The second is that eventual British entry is inevitable, but apparently he does not feel that it has to come soon. A British expert predicted to me that formal negotiations for entry between official British representatives and the Common Market will begin before the end of this year, and that British entry will be achieved in 1968. If one may judge by what the French are saying, this is wildly optimistic. The French do not expect Britain to get into the Com-

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mon Market during the lifetime of the present Labor government, whose mandate normally expires in 1969. This takes us all the way back to the estimate reportedly uttered by de Gaulle after his talks in Rambouillet with the Conservative Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan. He is alleged to have said then that there was no point in going out of the way to woo Macmillan, since in any case he was going to lose the next election (he did). After that, de Gaulle went on, there would be a Labor government, with which nothing could be done. (Labor before it took power was anti-Common Market, but it has changed its tune since.) "After that," de Gaulle is quoted as concluding, "we will have the young Conservatives, and with them we can do business."

But Couve de Murville at Brussels did not sound as though France were prepared to do business with any Britons within the Common Market, even Europeanized Britons. The reasons he cited for continuing to keep Britain out would not be disposed of even if England became a simon-pure European state. Most, if not all, of the comment that followed this speech, made at a closed session of the Common Market Council of Ministers, was based on fragmentary reports and leaks. No official text was ever released. I have in my possession, however, the stenographic transcript of this important declaration, so what follows is based on a complete and exact recording of what Couve de Murville actually said.

His argument was that the admission of Great Britain, which would necessarily entail the simultaneous or subsequent admission of other states as well, would tend to make the membership of the Common Market more or less congruent with that of the Organization for European Cooperation and Development. (He did not say more or less congruent with the membership of NATO, minus its overseas members, but he may have had that in mind.) Thus the Common Market would become a reincarnation of the Western bloc looking toward the United States which France is trying to loosen by her retreat from NATO and her overtures to the East. The reaction in Eastern Europe would be an answering tightening of its opposing bloc, and a consequent prolongation of the division of Europe into two potentially hostile camps whose continued existence France considers dangerous to peace.

Simultaneously, Couve de Murville continued, the great economic strength of this enlarged united Western Europe would provoke another sort of reaction from the only modern industrialized states (except for Eastern Europe) which would remain outside it—the United States, Canada and Japan. They would be impelled to try to get into the European Economic Community themselves, or at least to establish binding ties with it. The power of the United States is such that she would be certain to succeed in this effort. "Thus, fatally, this would mean not only an enormous enlarging of our European Economic Community. . .it would become a Western-Atlantic complex. . .Any sort of European construction would obviously have to be considered as definitely of the past."

On this point, de Gaulle's remarks at Bonn paralleled those of Couve de Murville in Brussels. The General said that one indispensable condition of maintaining European national personalities against the overwhelming power of the United States was "not to let the economic domain that six of us have built be dismembered. For if it is dismembered, then we will be swallowed up in another system, under American domination."

Couve de Murville told his colleagues at Brussels that this threatened swallowing of the European Economic Community by an Atlantic Economic Community would not result simply from the nature of the situation, but from conscious deliberate action by America. "It is sufficient to demonstrate this to recall what happened from the direction of the United States when Great Britain was first a candidate for entrance into the Common Market. At that time, the United States supported her candidacy very strongly, saying, 'This is a first step. It must be followed immediately afterwards by another negotiation. . .which will create an Atlantic Community, pooling the United

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States and the new European Economic Community.'"

Not only does France believe that the United States has designs upon the E.E.C., but she believes also that Britain is the conscious accomplice of that objective; and the British have done nothing to convince her of the contrary. At the June meeting of the NATO ministers in Luxembourg, Foreign Secretary George Brown said flatly that Britain's motives in seeking entry to the Common Market are not solely economic, but political. The London *Evening Standard* quoted an unnamed "minister who will play a leading role in the eventual negotiations between Great Britain and the Common Market" as saying: "Europe is at present developing very dangerous tendencies toward the establishment of a 'third force.' For the French, this goes without saying. But these tendencies are also developing among the West Germans and the Italians. Our objective is to reverse this tendency and to assure that Europe shall remain closely associated with the United States."

This is exactly what the French suspected, and it is why they have now toughened their resistance to British entry. They saw one sign of the British tendency to play the American game in her attitude at the Kennedy Round talks in Geneva, where the Common Market maintained a united "European" front which the British opposed. "Look at the support the United States gets from the United Kingdom on Vietnam," a French diplomat said to me, as another example of British subservience to the United States. "Yes," I said, "and it costs the government a good deal of trouble with the Labor left wing. Don't you think it is largely lip service?" "Of course it is," he answered, "but that makes it all the more significant. In the face of American power, the British don't dare act and talk as they really think. Within the Common Market, they would simply be the lackeys of the United States."

It was noticeable during de Gaulle's Polish trip that again and again when he had to refer to "Europe," the phrase he used was "the continent of Europe," thus implicitly ruling out Britain. It seemed clear that when he spoke of a Europe extending from "the Atlantic to the Urals," he was assuming that the Atlantic begins at the English Channel. He also aroused the suspicion that Britain will only get into the Common Market literally over de Gaulle's dead body.

There is, of course, another theory concerning French resistance to British entry into the E.E.C. On the basis of their integral strength, there are two nations that might have a chance to dominate it, Germany or France. Because of the moral disabilities inherited from the war, Germany is inhibited from applying her full weight. This leaves France as the leading power in the E.E.C. The introduction of Britain would confront her with a powerful rival for supremacy. "The conviction is widespread on the other side of the Rhine," *Le Monde* wrote after the Bonn conversations, "that it is through fear of being supplanted that Paris is barring the way to British adherence to the Common Market." Senator Robert Kennedy put it more succinctly. "Too many frogs in the puddle," was his analysis of the reason why France opposes British entry.

This is a consideration not necessarily excluded by the explanation that France sees in Britain the American Trojan horse which must not be allowed inside Common Market walls.

The Middle East

Several years ago an Israeli diplomat said to me bitterly, "It sometimes seems to us that France is the only friend we have left." Today, after the position taken by the French government concerning the Middle East crisis, sometimes described as "pro-Arab neutrality," this is not at all the sentiment that is being heard generally in Israel, however discreetly Israeli leaders may choose to express themselves. The French official attitude toward Israel came as a distinct shock to Israeli opinion, and, for that matter, to French opinion as well. For years France had befriended Israel. Her infant nuclear industry had been installed by France. The arms with which she defeated the Arabs were supplied by France.

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In spite of the General's reported *Realpolitik* remark: "Nations do not have friends, only interests," his condemnation of Israel surprised everybody. The French people, inclined to be pro-Israel, did not understand why the government felt it necessary to go so far. Neutrality, yes, perhaps, even if it did violence to sentimental reactions; but a taking of sides for the Arabs against Israel, no. This was undoubtedly what a majority of Frenchmen felt, and de Gaulle's position was generally unpopular. "If you think I worried about popular opinion on June 18, 1940!" de Gaulle is supposed to have snorted—but it was to popular opinion that he appealed at that time, and he has cultivated it often since. "My policy will be understood later," he is also reported to have said. The public opinion polls show that the French people do not understand it now.

What is the explanation? Officials are obviously somewhat embarrassed when they are asked for one. France might have abstained from voting in the United Nations on the Middle East question, but she chose, to the surprise of many, to cast her vote for the Yugoslav resolution. It is pointed out here in extenuation that while this called on the Israelis to withdraw from the territory they had occupied, it did not condemn them outright for having taken it in the first place.

"Our vote was based on considerations of pure principle," one French diplomat explained." We were not one hundred percent in accord with the Yugoslav resolution. We would no doubt have drafted it differently ourselves. But it seemed to us just and firm, establishing the idea of a two-step solution of the problem: first, withdrawal of the Israeli troops; second, negotiation of the basic issues. To accept the principle that territories can be taken by the use of force and then serve as counters for bargaining would be grave."

"We didn't condemn Israel," another spokesman said, "although we had warned her in advance against opening hostilities. We feared this would precipitate a crisis which might go on for a long time—and so far we see no reason to change that opinion. We do not think that Israel has improved her position, whatever the situation may seem to be at the moment. She has made the conditions of her existence more difficult. She has aggravated the refugee problem by increasing the number of refugees."

Regarding the warning to the Israelis not to attack first—advice also given them by the United States—de Gaulle's observation, made to at least two prominent persons to my knowledge, has been widely circulated: "I told them not to attack, but they did. I hold it against them." This has been cited as evidence that de Gaulle's subsequent stand resulted from personal pique because his counsel was disregarded. His collaborators deny this. "The General is not influenced by his personal reactions in formulating national policy," one of them objected, "neither in this case nor in his attitude toward the United States." "The General has a long memory, especially for things that rankle," wrote Maurice Duverger, certainly no Gaullist, "but he is hardly emotional by nature, and he bases his diplomacy on interests rather than on friendship or enmity. His attitude derives much more from a realistic vision of things and from rational calculations than from personal sentiments."

His advice to Israel may therefore be ascribed primarily to one of his two present obsessions—concern for the maintenance of peace. Perhaps his effort to maintain it backfired in this case. When Israeli Ambassador to Paris Walter Eytan and Foreign Minister Abba Ebban heard de Gaulle's advice—which, contrary to a widespread report, was not delivered in a glacial interview, but with de Gaulle's customary courtesy—the conclusion they drew was that Israel was in danger of losing her chief furnisher of arms and had therefore better use those she had before they became obsolescent. If so, their fears were justified when an arms embargo was applied by France, which might have caused them great difficulties if the fighting had lasted longer. One important non-French diplomat has told me that the Israelis were warned in advance that an arms embargo would be applied. Whether this is accurate or not, it is true

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that it was de Gaulle personally who had it put into effect. Returning from Italy, where he had gone for the Common Market summit conference, he read in the newspapers that El Al planes were hastily loading at Bordeaux with arms and spare parts so heavily that they could hardly get off the ground. "Have that stopped!" he ordered, and it was stopped.

French officials like to stress the point that the embargo actually applied not to Israel alone, but to eight countries. This is true, but it was no embarrassment to the Arab states, which were not almost exclusively dependent on France for weapons, as Israel was. Oddly enough, one reason why the embargo was not lifted after the ceasefire was precisely that it applied to the Arabs as well. They began clamoring for French AMX tanks after they first appeared in public in the July 14 parade, and in the obtaining circumstances, France was not too anxious to provide them. The embargo gave her an excuse not to do so. Its prolongation, however, continued to be more disadvantageous to Israel than to the Arab states. While Soviet Russia was pouring arms into Egypt to make up for what she had lost in the fighting, Israel was unable to replace her own losses in French aircraft. It is unlikely that her preconflict orders for fifty more French planes will be filled. In this case Obsession One (the preservation of peace) is making difficulties for Obsession Two (American power), for an Israel deprived of French planes will have to turn to the United States for military aircraft, which the United States will no doubt furnish, although she is not particularly anxious to do so.

Neither of these two obsessions, however, is likely to make France forget another extremely important factor in the shaping of her Middle East policy. This is not a question of moral principle, and even less, although some persons have evoked this as an important element, a desire to support Soviet policy as part of the rapprochement with the East. De Gaulle himself said at Bonn, "We were led to assume a position analogous to that of the Soviet Union, but for different reasons." The chief reason was the importance attached by France to her relations with the Arab world, especially with North Africa. After the blow dealt her there by the Algerian revolution, she had worked long and patiently to restore her positions, and she is prepared to sacrifice Israel, or almost anyone else, rather than lose the fruits of that effort. Her ties with North Africa are again multitudinous and vital—oil, investments, provision of technicians and experts, maintenance of cultural relations (there are 12,000 French teachers in Algeria alone).

"People are talking of a turning point in our Israeli policy," one diplomat said. "There has indeed been a turning point, but it didn't come with the last crisis. It started in 1962, when Algeria became independent. Our primary task then was to reestablish good relations with the Arab states. This was not easy to do while still remaining on good terms with Israel, but we managed to pull it off—until Israel precipitated the crisis we were trying to avoid by attacking first. We haven't dropped Israel. We are friends of Israel and hope to remain so. But we are not her allies. We attach a very specific definition to the term 'ally.' It means that a treaty of alliance exists, and we have none with Israel. But we are happy to maintain good relations with her, and we hope she will not make that impossible by adopting a course of action which will oblige us to choose flatly between one side and the other. If it comes to that, we have no choice. Can you imagine France abandoning Tunis, Morocco and Algeria? For us they have absolute priority."

"Priority over French-speaking Black Africa included?" I asked, for one of the sensations at the United Nations had been the sight of some of these countries, which usually follow faithfully in the French wake, voting on the opposite side from France.

"If it becomes necessary to choose, yes."

Canada

French public opinion had not yet recovered from the shock de Gaulle gave it concerning the Middle East when he shocked it for a second time by his encouragement

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of Quebec separatism. This time the shock resulted from a different sort of reason. The country that had invented good taste was appalled at the spectacle of its chief representative stirring up trouble in a country of which he was the guest. Even de Gaulle's bitterest political enemies had always considered him the soul of meticulous courtesy, a stickler for protocol and correct behavior. It is true that de Gaulle's behavior in Canada corresponded to Oscar Wilde's definition of a gentleman as one who is never rude—unintentionally. His defenders after the fact robbed him of this plea to privilege by maintaining that his now celebrated cry of "*Vive le Québec libre*" had, in a sense, been unintentional, because he had been carried away by the unexpected and unbridled enthusiasm of his welcome. It was also suggested that he was unaware of the fact that the phrase *Québec libre* (free Quebec), in itself irreproachable, since freedom is a respectable aim for anybody, had a special significance in this case because it is the slogan of the separatists.

Neither of these explanations can carry much weight for those familiar with de Gaulle's methods of operation. The staff work of his office is excellent. The General is well and thoroughly briefed everywhere he goes. He certainly knew what *Québec libre* meant for the citizens of Canada, and employed that phrase deliberately. He is not a man to be carried away by his emotions—he is not devoid of them, but he has mastered them—and if he uttered those words it was not because he had been betrayed into incautiousness by the contagious warmth of the throng. It is true that he might not have uttered them if the response to his visit had been more restrained; but this would have been a calculated act, as what he actually did say was calculated also, the result of tactics familiar to anyone who has ever made an extended trip with de Gaulle, or, indeed, analyzed closely the nature of his pronouncements in Paris. His method is what nowadays we call escalation, a very gradual escalation. Each speech in any series is a probe. The first barely pricks the surface. If the reaction is favorable, the next digs a little deeper. It could be called a method of trial and error, except that it attempts to avoid error by the cautious process of progressive minute explorations. When the probing takes a direction that provokes a reaction unfavorable to the success of the objective, the direction is changed. If you read the Canadian speeches of de Gaulle in the order in which they were delivered, you will remark this process of escalation. The deeper the probe went, the heartier was the local response. So the General continued to dig deeper and deeper, until he hit the nerve.

Why did he do it? One factor may have been his mystical feeling about France and his understanding of the deep ties that bind two countries possessing a common language and a common cultural heritage. (He applies this, for instance, to the relationship between England and the United States.) The General thinks in long-range terms, considering present political alignments and ideologies (in the case of Eastern Europe, for instance) as ephemeral and less deeply rooted than the constants of history and geography. It is only two hundred years since Canada ceased to be French, one-tenth of the period of recorded French history. De Gaulle may think that this is not long enough, comparatively, to have alienated French-speaking Canada definitively from the mother country. But did he foresee an eventual return of Quebec to the French political fold? For so realistic a statesman, this hardly seems likely. The primary motive for his attitude in Canada has to be sought elsewhere, and the practical consequences he hoped to provoke in some other field than in that of the political relationship between France and Quebec.

The key to his motive he provided himself when he put Quebec on guard against her powerful neighbor to the south. The Canadian tour was an episode in the campaign to contain what de Gaulle calls American hegemony. It was inspired by the obsession with American power. He simultaneously stirred up antagonism to the United States (which exists in all parts of Canada; a Canadian diplomat recently referred casually in a conversation with me to "Canadian anti-Americanism," as though it were a routine fact of life too common to require any explanation) and spurred Que-

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bec on to apply stronger pressure to Ottawa. In these circumstances, one of the directions in which a heightened influence of the French-speaking element in Canada might operate would be to encourage stiffer resistance to American influence. Could it result in such practical consequences as a change in the Canadian policy, inspired by the United States, of refusing to sell uranium to France without imposing conditions on the use to be made of it?

De Gaulle's critics argue that an attempt to breach American positions in Canada is futile. The American economic position in Canada is too strong, they point out, and France's so weak as to be virtually nonexistent. In the unlikely event that Quebec should become completely independent, they continue, her ability to stand up against the overpowering weight of the United States would be diminished, not increased. But the General is not preoccupied with material factors alone. He does not think that military power and economic power exhaust its forms. There is also the spiritual power of ideas. In Quebec (as in Poland), he has planted the seeds of his ideas where he hopes they will grow. He is attempting there to construct one more dike to hold back the American tide, this one very close to the headwaters.

The attempt to limit the extent to which the United States may exercise her great power by setting up obstacles to it wherever there seems to be propitious terrain may be doomed to failure (there are probably more effective internal checks to its abuse in the character of the American people and the nature of their governmental machinery than any which can be applied from without), but the obsession concerning it impels the Gaullists to fight this battle even though they themselves admit that it is likely to be a losing one.

One admission of this sort was made by no less a personage than Prime Minister Georges Pompidou, in an interview published by the weekly *Express* September 4. "General de Gaulle," one of his interviewers said, "preaches resistance to the American hegemony, but he has not provided the means for resistance. He is the archetype of the intellectual, for whom what he says is purely theoretical and in the long run changes nothing on the practical plane."

"It is not easy to row upstream," Pompidou answered. "André Malraux once wondered in my presence if General de Gaulle would not turn out to have been the Philopoemen of France. You know who he was: the last Greek resister before the abdication of Greece and the definitive victory of Rome. It is possible. I would say it is probable if everyone becomes resigned to abdication."

This last phrase is somewhat akin in spirit to the answer which, according to Plutarch, Philopoemen (253-184 B.C.) made to an advocate of composition with Rome: "Why are you in so much of a hurry to witness the unfortunate destiny of Greece?"

There are many Frenchmen who see their country as the Greece of the modern world, and the United States as the Rome. An important difference is that the disagreements between France and the United States have never reached the stage of military conflict and in all probability never will. In war, they have always been on the same side. A similarity is the mutual respect they pay one another for their achievements in the domains in which each excels; even when they were fighting each other, the Greeks acknowledged the skill of the Romans as engineers and lawmakers, the Romans admired the Greeks as artists and philosophers. Today many persons in France regard the antagonisms between France and the United States as representing basically what divided the Greeks and the Romans, a struggle between brains and brawn. In the classical world, it was brawn that won.

To Sum Up

So what must we conclude? Are we indeed faced with that "great diplomatic turning point" in French policy that so many French political writers believe they discern?

I should say, no. No turning point, but very probably an increase in voltage. The two "new" obsessions are not really new. They are simply intensifications of views which existed before. The threat of American domination has been evoked frequently

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by de Gaulle in recent years; the difference is that now he considers American power much more overwhelming and much less counterbalanced by Soviet power. His concern about peace has also been expressed often before; but concern seems now to have ripened into acute apprehension.

The intensification of these two obsessions may be expected to be matched by an intensification of the measures with which de Gaulle hopes to conjure the dangers he sees. He is also impelled to urgency by a realization that his time is short. He cannot possibly hope to stay at the helm until the processes he has started on their way have reached their term; hence he must try to create irreversible situations as quickly as he can. "Ah, if only the General were twenty years younger!" Finance Minister Michel Debré once said to me. (It might be retorted that he is, for his present capacities and activities might well tax a man twenty years his junior.) As it is, his aides estimate that they can count on no more than four years more of active direction by de Gaulle.

What may we expect during those next four years, or less?

1. We may expect stiffened opposition to America's continually increasing power, and the establishment of checks to it, with the object of decreasing America's influence and increasing France's (as in Canada) wherever it seems that this can de done—for instance, in Latin America and in Africa.

2. We may expect continued opposition to the entrance of Great Britain, viewed as America's henchman, into the Common Market, and continued efforts to make of the Common Market a politically congruent Europe whose objective will be to foster European interests independently of transatlantic objectives.

3. We may expect an attempt to lessen the power gap between the United States and the Soviet Union by increasing French cooperation with Eastern Europe (and Western European cooperation too, if he can bring others along with him), thus throwing some European weight into the Soviet side of the balance, but without risking a change from dependence on the United States to dependence on Russia, which would constitute the much discussed "reversal of alliances."

4. We may expect complete withdrawal from NATO and an attempt to persuade others to follow this example in order to break up the western half of the two-bloc system which he considers dangerous, and encouragement of the countries of Eastern Europe to increase their independence from Russia to break up the eastern half. In this respect, it will be interesting to follow closely the visit he has tentatively scheduled for next spring to Romania, so far the most unruly maverick in the Soviet herd.

5. We may expect renewed efforts to bring about the reunification of Germany, considered by de Gaulle as necessary to end the gravest potential threat to peace in Europe.

6. We may expect a helping hand from France to end the Vietnam war, considered the gravest threat to peace in Asia—if France ever finds herself in a position to offer one. But the French at the moment see no means by which they can help shorten the war.

7. We may expect a multiplication of ties of all sorts between France and Black and North Africa, extending to the Arab states of the Middle East.

This is the future shape of French foreign policy as it looks at present. It will not necessarily change greatly when de Gaulle drops the reins. A Gaullist successor would tend to maintain it entire, although he would probably implement it with less skill. A non-Gaullist successor might follow much of it. If he does not, and if France ceases to be the leader in the development of these policies, it is not inconceivable that some other European statesman will pick them up and become the pacemaker.

It is also possible that changed circumstances may cause a complete revision of strategy and tactics, if not of basic principle. The end of the Vietnam war, for instance, would bring about profound changes in political attitudes everywhere in the world. But for the moment, the prediction for whatever political weather is generated in France remains: "hotter and stormy."

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FILM AND THEATER

Reflections on the Theater

ROBERT ARDREY

The *théâtre engagé,* as it flourished in America in the 1930's, was both inspired and confined by the times with which it was engaged. The Great Depression jarred you into pity and compassion for the next man. The tyrannies and persecutions supervised by various totalitarian powers abroad enlisted your sympathies for men you had never met. Now at decade's end the implications of war combed your conscience and your dedications with little sharp teeth of fear and despair. The times with which we were engaged were of a most special order.

The weakness of our theater was one of philosophy, not craftsmanship. We told our stories well. We believed in heroes, and we raised them up to win or fall. A new poetry—the poetry of the common man—invested the American stage. Sidney Kingsley's Dead End Kids diving into East River, Clifford Odets' Jewish family quarreling in the Bronx, Irwin Shaw's dead soldiers faced by their wives, all combined to sing a song we had never heard before. Pity, terror, lyricism graced a theater that no most demanding Greek could have utterly scorned. But our philosophy was something else again; we were victims, most of us, of the economic fallacy.

I cannot blame the young artist of the Great Depression if, wandering through a world of want, he tended to interpret all human fault as springing from economic deprivation. Was there crime? It was a consequence of poverty. How could parents and children, wives and husbands fail to quarrel in environments so bleak? Did wars threaten, injustices prevail? Somebody, somewhere, must be clanging a cash register. Thirty years later intelligent men, in a time of affluence, would still with nostalgic determination cling to an answer by then demonstrably obsolete. If it was our answer in a time of poverty, one cannot wonder.

But the answer was nonetheless inadequate. And as the decade drew toward its close, the threat of war began to overshadow the reality of want: our times were growing larger than our philosophy. Mine was the advantage that as a non-Marxist I had no dogmatic allegiances. My play, *Thunder Rock,* was thus an effort to reach out and through theatrical invention find something to say commensurate with the times that would so shortly engage us.

To speak of any play as a product of measured purpose is, of course, a pomposity. The idea for *Thunder Rock* came about, as do most ideas, through subconscious translation and conjunction of chance experience. I spent the autumn of 1938 on the Atlantic side of the island of Nantucket. The Munich Crisis reigned on the radio and in the newspapers that came daily from the mainland. Even the chance factor that I was living with nothing but three thousand miles of gray water to shield me from European events contributed its bit, for I doubt that I should have been quite so absorbed had I been living in California beside the wrong ocean. When the resolution of the crisis favored peace for our time, like many another I found myself

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✪ ROBERT ARDREY's essay is part of the introduction to his *Plays of Three Decades* to be published next year by Atheneum in New York and by Collins in London. Mr. Ardrey, first known as a playwright, is the author of *African Genesis and Territorial Imperatives.*

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overwhelmingly convinced that war was inevitable. But I, it so happened, had nowhere to direct my thoughts and my fears but to the proper sea. What could men do?

The autumn wore on and northeast storms piled in from the Atlantic. Night after night I drove into the village for dinner, passing the lighthouse called Sankaty Head. Above me the vast gem of light revolved in the sweeping rain. But no first inkling of *Thunder Rock* came, nor even a determination to write a play grappling with the dilemma that so preoccupied me. I was writing another play, on quite another theme; suffering from my preoccupations, it was coming to pieces. I never finished it, and returned to New York.

I must assume, however, that the materials for *Thunder Rock* were being deposited in some inconspicuous corner of my brain, there to be worked over a bit while I wasn't looking. Why they made their sudden appearance when they did, I do not know. But one afternoon I went to the ballet and found myself facing *Swan Lake,* a traditional entertainment which I singularly fail to enjoy. I closed my eyes. The music was pleasant enough. And in the half-hour or so of the ballet's duration I had *Thunder Rock* complete with the lighthouse in northern Lake Michigan, the wrecked ship of almost a century before, the passengers reborn in the mind of the lightkeeper, and all three curtains.

Against the background of a war that I knew must come, I wrote the play in New Orleans in the winter and spring of 1939, rewrote it in Connecticut the following summer. Elia Kazan, who had directed my play, *Casey Jones,* came out to the country, read it, wanted it for the Group Theatre, which at the moment had an unemployed acting company, and no play. We agreed that Kazan would be wrong as director for this play, but that Harold Clurman, the Group's famous founder, would be perfect. Clurman was willing. I came into New York and promptly encountered the Hitler-Stalin pact, which, while spreading painful disarray in the more Marxist-tending ranks of Broadway's *avant-garde,* left only a line or so to be written into my third act to complete the play. War in Europe would be with us within days.

A problem that must continually trouble any theater engaged with its times is timing itself. We were convinced, all of us, whatever our political persuasions, that the timing of the production could not be better. Rehearsals were scheduled for the earliest possible date. When Clurman for reasons more personal than political contracted a nervous breakdown, we decided against delay. With only three days to prepare himself, Kazan took over the direction. Now new problems confronted us. The Group had been flag-bearer of the *avant-garde* theater for just long enough to produce within its ranks a vested interest or two in the way of cliques. There were the old-timers who resented Kazan, the johnny-come-lately. Worse, there was the Communist Party clique with no raging enthusiasm for the play itself and even less for Kazan, whose departure from the Party some years earlier had left none unaware of just what he thought of it. The cliques would one day destroy the Group Theatre. They did not, however, destroy *Thunder Rock.* What destroyed us was our supposedly perfect timing.

The play opened in the middle of November, 1939, to the worst reviews that I have ever received. Our most eminent critic deplored a play containing so much thunder and so little rock. More typical was the amused comment of another that the Group had found itself with so little to do that it had turned to playing spook-a-boo. Our innocent determination to open the play as quickly as possible had resulted in its production at the worst possible moment. It was the brief time remembered in America as that of "the phony war." No one believed that there was a war. Particularly in our most intellectual circles it was fashionable to assert that the powers had made a deal, that the little shooting then taking place was window dressing, that there never would be a war. My play was left without a premise. Had the last word on *Thunder Rock* been left to the New York critics, it would today be as forgotten as my later *Jeb.*

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I retired to Hollywood in no little gloom concerning my future in the theater. There, for Garson Kanin, I wrote my first produced screenplay, an adaptation of Sidney Howard's *They Knew What They Wanted.* And there, scouting in northern California for locations, Kanin and I read that the war was on. The Lowlands, Dunkirk, the Fall of France followed one upon another. And then one day a month or so later I read a report from London written by the veteran foreign correspondent Vincent Sheean. The mood of the British people in this war, he wrote, could not be compared to the mood of the last. *Chu Chin Chow* had been the hit of the First World War; a play called *Thunder Rock* was the hit of this one.

I knew nothing about it. I scrambled for a telephone, called my New York agent. He knew nothing either. During the winter, rights had been granted to a London producer, Herbert Marshall, but since with Dunkirk the London theater had all but closed down, my agent had assumed that the production was abandoned. There was nothing we could do. By now London was being bombed, the Battle of Britain was stepping up in violence, and what transatlantic communication existed was committed to priority affairs. You could not dash off a cable asking how was business at some West End play. But bit by bit information came back to us.

The play had been first presented at the Neighbourhood Playhouse, a theater so small as to be described to me by the late John van Druten as "just two pianos wide." Although Michael Redgrave played the lightkeeper, still the production was so inconspicuous that Marshall succeeded in keeping on with rehearsals despite the aftermath of Dunkirk. When the play at last opened, it was the second night after the Fall of France, and only one other theater was open in London. The little audience at the Neighbourhood sat with gas masks in laps.

Strange things can happen in the theater, stranger and more shaking than in any other art; and perhaps that is why the theater, despite its worst efforts, will always be with us. The response to *Thunder Rock* that night carried a burden, I believe, of hysteria. None will ever know what measure of despair lay beneath the surface of British courage on the second night after the Fall of France. Whatever was the measure, that despair found in *Thunder Rock* some secret answer of restrained hope known better to its audience than to its author. The play was moved to the larger Globe Theatre in the West End, where it played to the same audiences lugging their gas masks through all the embattled summer. Then in September the adjoining Queen's Theatre took a direct hit from a bomb. The Globe and all other London theaters were closed. *Thunder Rock* went on through most of the war, playing in those cities where the bombing, for the time, was the lightest.

Thunder Rock, I have come to believe, is an imperfect play. Its cast includes no villain; the antagonist must exist in the minds of the audience. If the audience is cynical or satisfied or subjected to no sense of pressing danger, then the play does not exist. But if the audience is haunted by lethal fear or spiritual despair, then the play will be as large as the fear is intense. It is strictly a play for desperate people.

My opinion of the play was confirmed, I think, when after the war, to my astonishment, it became such a success in Central and Eastern Europe as to surpass its success in Britain. By then, when I thought of it at all, I had come to accept it as a war play of sorts, one of solace or inspiration to "our side." Suddenly, the war scarcely over, it was blossoming on "their side." Within six weeks after V-E Day it was running in Vienna, and by the autumn of 1945 in Budapest, in Prague, and spectacularly in Berlin. Long before this, of course, the author and his work had ceased to have even a nodding acquaintance. I pursued my rather ordinary existence; the play went its flamboyant way, and occasionally I would have news of its most recent adventures and feel a certain envy. I heard about the episode in Berlin from William L. Shirer, who had attended the opening.

The American occupation forces, it seems,

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were in an almighty hurry to get German life back to something resembling normal. They knew or were informed of the German passion for theater, a passion perhaps more devouring than that of any other people. In the American sector of Berlin, amongst miles of rubble, stood a theater spared by some wartime miracle any vital damage from bombs or bombardment. The Americans seized on their good fortune and pressed ahead to be the first of the occupying authorities to present Berliners with a Western play. For reasons of prestige, they wanted an American play. For reasons of expediency, I presume—*Thunder Rock* was already in translation and playing in Vienna—they chose mine. Problems of production were considerable. A gutted city offered no theatrical lights, no materials for scenery. Even the printing of tickets required a task force. But most ticklish of all problems was that of casting. Where, after all the years of Adolf Hitler, could actors be found who would not, to American disgrace, turn out to be the most outrageous of Nazis? A solution presented itself: the play was cast with none but recently released inmates of concentration camps.

And so this was the opening that Shirer attended in October, 1945. We had never met. He knew only vaguely of the play, but he went with an American friend who had had a hand in the production. They stood outside the theater before curtain time watching the audience's remarkable assemblage. Not even the American brass, of course, could arrive in cars. A first-night might be occurring in Berlin, but the streets outside were still choked with rubble. Out of the shadows of an unlighted city, along footpaths through the ruins of what had once been Berlin, walked the audience. And Shirer marveled: how had Berliners through their city's last torments preserved their gowns, their white ties, their tails?

The curtain rose on the interior of the lighthouse. And just as it had happened in besieged, isolated London over five long years before, an unaccountable emotion gripped an audience in Berlin. Behind the gowns, behind the white ties, lived a people sheltering an equivalent despair. But for Shirer, the outsider, the eternal reporter, a more immediate question left him puzzled. During the first interval he and his friend had their cigarettes outside the theater.

"What I can't figure out," said Shirer, "is how you ever put up that set. It's magnificent. It looks exactly like brick."

"It is," said his friend, indicating the street.

The *théâtre engagé,* although today abandoned, could despite its innumerable hazards offer the playwright innumerable rewards. But the hazards could be painful.

The history of *Jeb* offers a contrary image to that of *Thunder Rock.* It was presented in New York in 1946 by Herman Shumlin, one of our ablest and most experienced producer-directors. Its production was elaborate, unhurried, painstaking. No problems abnormal to the theater appeared in rehearsal. We had the benefit of a business manager named David Merrick, new to the theater but of such ability that he needed no future to prove it. The play opened early one week, drew an excellent press and enlisted many a passionate private advocate besides, and closed on Saturday after seven performances. On a night in February, 1946, *Jeb* vanished like a dark old bird across a dubious horizon and was never seen again.

I had been with the American Negro always. Inasmuch as I had been born on the edge of Chicago's Black Belt, I never attended any but integrated schools. The phrase itself as used today tends to leave me with a sense of bafflement, so completely did we take it for granted that blacks and whites went to school together. Nor did anyone see evident harm in it. My giant Chicago high school even in the 1920's had a Negro population of approximately a fifth, yet its scholastic standards were such that it is reputed to have produced more eventual Ph.D.'s than any other high school in America. At my university, one of the most advanced in the world, any question of color was simply unthinkable. And when I was playing jazz piano in

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Chicago joints, I lived where color meant least, and our local heroes were named Louis Armstrong and Earl Hines.

Out of such a background, perhaps too innocent, I wrote *Jeb*. At the time there was no great body of literature produced by whites and concerned with blacks, and what little there was—works such as *Strange Fruit* and *Deep Are the Roots*—saw the problem of the Negro in terms of miscegenation. By then I had lived in the American South and could compare new observations with old recollections, and I knew that no white attitude more infuriated the Negro than the assumption that his problems could be reduced to sex. Such sentimental postures served to cloud, even to enhance the one problem that mattered to him: discrimination. And so I wrote a story about a one-legged veteran who returns from the war bearing what for him is a treasure, the ability to run an adding machine, only to discover in his town down South that the adding machine is a white man's job.

Jeb, in other words, was a civil rights play. Its failure cost me a year and a half of my life, its backers eighty-five thousand dollars, and so embittered Herman Shumlin that he remained inactive in the theater for several seasons. Yet the failure, viewed through hindsight, was of the simplest order. If *Thunder Rock* in New York had been a few months ahead of its time, *Jeb* was almost twenty years. I do not know of a playwright committed to a theater engaged with its times who ever missed his mark by quite such an ample margin.

There remained a question, however—one that disturbed us deeply in these years—as to whether such plays were indeed possible. Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* was the last masterpiece in a dramatic line that had begun so splendidly with *Waiting for Lefty*. Miller freed himself from the economic obsession that had weakened many early plays and, as I had done with *Jeb,* looked rather to the deprivation of dignity as the ultimate evil. Perhaps our real disturbance in the late 1940's lay less with what would happen to the kind of theater that we respected, and more with what was happening to the American theater as a whole.

And something was happening. It was as if the band of playwrights who had created a broad vital theater in the twenties and thirties never returned from the war. Dramatists who had given us eight, ten or a dozen memorable plays every season now were giving us very nearly none. A few were dead, a few were ailing. Most, however, were still around, writing either ineffectively or sporadically or not at all. What creative plague had swept through that healthy club, the Dramatists Guild?

I have no answer of any definition. I believe for some the enormity of the Second World War, its heights of heroism and its depths of villainy, made earlier inspirations seem trivial. Perhaps also the war brought about a philosophical disarray. The playwright must possess an organized estimate of man, whether dogmatic or intuitive, whether acquired intellectually or simply through his fingertips, if he is to write with any sense of security. The Freudians who had followed in O'Neill's train no less than the Marxists of the *avant-garde* had witnessed through the war years human actions that could be explained by neither aim-inhibited eroticism nor the weary dialectics of the class struggle. The playwright is a specialist, a broker dealing in human motivation. And perhaps the war and its aftermath left many a broker a bankrupt.

I do not know the whole answer. I do know that in 1956, when I turned to scientific investigation, it was in part because of my playwright's dissatisfaction with what I thought I knew about people. That, however, was simply one man's road. All I can state with authority is that the established playwrights vanished, that with them vanished the great era of the American theater, and that the vacuum left behind was slowly to be filled by new playwrights and new audiences with new theatrical expectations.

Foremost of the American contributors to the new theater was Tennessee Williams. Lyrical, gifted with a superb sense of character and situation, Williams introduced not only to Broadway but to the world stage what might be called the new com-

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mercialism. It was a development that none, following Williams' career, could at first foresee. With his *Glass Menagerie* he established himself as one of the purest poets we had ever possessed. His was anything, of course, but the *théâtre engagé*. It was a theater of nostalgia, of gentle yet overpowering mood, of forgotten beauties. *A Streetcar Named Desire* marked the halfway point of his rapid development. Mood and beauty were still retained, but now mixed with sensation and shock. Then, with the production of *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof,* our ablest living playwright surrendered himself totally to the theatrical values of shock and the substitution of sensation for emotion. Audiences that once had roared with laughter at the flush of an offstage toilet now thrilled to the brutalities of a father charging his son with homosexuality, and of a son in reprisal revealing that the father has cancer.

Williams demonstrated conclusively two conditions of far-ranging importance to the contemporary theater. First, he showed that the sympathies and emotions of an audience need not be enlisted to secure the success of a play, but attention may be held by a series of shocks, if only new and more remarkable shocks can be devised to replace old, outworn ones. And second, he demonstrated that any concern for man that may have disturbed the philosophies of the older playwrights was quite unnecessary. A playwright must have his estimate of man, without doubt, but it need contain no concern whatsoever.

The contribution of Tennessee Williams to the contemporary theater cannot be overemphasized. He not only established new patterns of playwriting but he drew new audiences and alienated old. From the viewpoint of a creative theater as a whole, however, there remained the problem that Williams was inimitable. He was a phenomenon. So immense were his gifts—not only for dialogue, for situation, for character, for humor, but also for the invention of shocks unimaginable by others (who but Williams could have reached such a peak as that of children eating a homosexual?)—that he threatened to become a one-man theater. If a new, truly *avant-garde* theater was to come into being, then its stages must be open to writers less gifted than Williams.

That theater came about. I cannot maintain that its definitive contribution was drawn from the soap opera of American radio, since the contribution came from overseas. One can only conclude that by parallel evolution the genius of American radio's daytime serials and the varied inspirations of several transatlantic authors all arrived at the same conclusion: if you are looking for a common denominator accessible to the many, there is nothing to beat self-pity.

The gifts of a John Osborne can be no more derogated than the gifts of a Tennessee Williams. Others on the continent had been making tentative contributions. A generation of French playwrights, in the wake of existentialism, brought forth a fresh enchantment, obscurantism, making possible and respectable a play in which no one including the author need know what the play is about. Even Bertolt Brecht (although I doubt that he would have enjoyed the consequences) out of his long, rewarding career made a significant contribution. His theories of alienation—that the audience should remain objective and should not be expected to care—lent intellectual justification for lesser playwrights to demand attention for characters lacking justification for having ever been born, let alone written.

None of these new trends, however, had the force to reform a theater. Only an Osborne could have written *Look Back in Anger* with rage of such vehemence and brilliance as to shake every stage in the world. No one quite knew what Osborne was so angry about, but it no longer mattered. As art could exist for art's sake, so rage could exist for rage's sake. Something that did matter, however, was what lay at the heart of the rage, the soap-opera secret that would set the style for a theater to come: bleeding, suffering, blinding self-pity.

The fuel for the vanished *avant-garde* theater had been the playwright's sorrow for the next man; the fuel for the new one

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became the playwright's sorrow for himself. As teen-agers after the death of their hero, James Dean, bought James Dean pillows on which to cry themselves to sleep, so a new kind of playwright created a new kind of pillow for comparable purpose. And the style was contagious. Even Arthur Miller, who had given the *théâtre engagé* its last great moment, could contribute to the Theater of Self-Pity his *After the Fall,* a play so personal, of such concern for the playwright and of such callousness toward others, that it must one day assume a historic position among the New York theater's most embarrassing moments.

A theater cannot exist without an audience, and so one must assume that many a theatergoer in our affluent world, if he is to respond to such plays in the playhouse darkness, must secretly feel inordinately sorry for himself. A theater need not be engaged with its times, but it must somehow be a function of them. The Theater of Self-Pity, taking its place in the literary sphere of poetry, the novel, even films, exerts no monopoly on such diversions as the antihero, the obscure statement, the search for remarkable sensations, or the masochistic pleasures of defeat. Are we all that bored? Are we all that uncaring? One cannot say, but the little mirror of the new theater most certainly reflects a light far more searching than its own.

But then, of course, one must remind oneself that a great many people have stopped going to the theater at all.

Shadow of Heroes was my last experiment with playwriting. By 1956 I had decided that, whether or not I had anything to offer the theater, the theater with its new dispositions had little to offer me. I moved abroad. Africa and certain fresh enchantments of an old love, anthropology, had come to offer me more compelling horizons. Yet in the autumn of that year I was no sooner installed at a desk in London's Natural History Museum, there to start picking up the pieces of an education abandoned for over twenty years, than the Hungarian Revolution broke out. The world's imagination was inflamed no less than mine. Then the brutal suppression of the uprising took place, and again my own horror was simply a portion of the world's. But I was left with a question: Why had the Hungarians risen in the first place, when the end was inevitable? There had been no political plots. (As did many other observers, I was later to confirm it.) No spies, no secret police had anticipated the action. In a sudden moment of common, inspired lunacy a small people had risen against one of the world's greatest powers. Why had they done it? What was the story?

It was a playwright's problem of motivation, the kind of large unanswerable question that may have contributed to the theater's growing bankruptcy. I could not stay away. By now Budapest was inaccessible to an American. I went to Bonn, Munich, Berlin, Salzburg to talk to Western observers whom I trusted and who had been in Budapest through the brief days when Hungarians believed themselves free. Then I settled in Vienna for the winter. Hungarians were crowded there waiting for admission to Canada, to Australia, to the world's far sanctuaries. Others were still coming over the border, and there were nights of waiting in relief cars among snowy fields while one watched the ghastly flare of the border guards' rockets and listened to distant gunfire and reckoned that someone had or had not made it.

For any author engaged with his times there was inspiration and material beyond measure on the Hungarian border that winter. But while the plight of the refugees was moving, still the story of Europe is one endless tale centuries long of people in flight, and these were the best-treated refugees that the world had ever known. I was moved less by the incidents of their present or future, more by the incidents of their past. What had the years been like? How had they felt at certain moments? What had been their sensations on the second day of the uprising? The third? Bits piled on bits. I was more the detective than the journalist, since my final curiosity lay with not what had happened, but why. Patterns slowly took shape, and the life of Hungary's postwar years emerged before me with

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reality, even though I had never been there.

I could not resist. I wrote a play about it, finishing it in the spring. But the play left me dissatisfied for it looked at Hungary through Western eyes. I put it away, went off to Africa, resumed my anthropology. Not until the following autumn back in Europe again did I wake at six o'clock one morning knowing precisely what the play should be about: Julia Rajk. The widow of Laszlo Rajk, Hungary's Foreign Minister betrayed and officially murdered years before, had stood at the emotional center of events leading to the revolt. I brought out my stacked-away notes. My subconscious perception had been correct. If a Western audience were to witness the agony that had been Hungary's, then it must witness the events through the eyes of Julia Rajk.

Suddenly I no longer wanted to write a conventional play. My earlier effort had reduced one of the most enormous human assertions of the twentieth century to simple melodrama. I wanted to bring to the stage, if possible, a documentary play presenting in valid scene after valid scene Hungary's story. The circumstances of Julia Rajk's life could have been created by a dramatist in the first place; they required little invention to transpose to the stage, little shaping to assume dramatic form. History itself, with the original players, would tell the story.

But there was a searing problem: Mrs. Rajk was still alive. She was one of those betrayed on the morning of the intervention, and with several others, including Premier Nagy and General Maleter, she was still held by the Russians in a Rumanian prison. What would happen to her if I wrote such a play? I went again on my autumn rounds visiting some of her oldest friends now in Munich, Vienna, London. I obtained from them a new store of recollections and insights. And as to the central question they were in approximate agreement: If the play was publicly presented, the chances were nine out of ten that it would act to protect her. There was a tenth chance, of course, that they would take her out and shoot her.

It was an appalling decision for a playwright to face. But her friends shrugged it off. They were all graduates of the same series of Nazi prisons and torture chambers, of Communist prisons and torture chambers. They were a lean lot, and in total agreement: Write the play; she'd be the last to say no.

And so I wrote the play. It was presented by Toby Rowland early in October, 1958, at London's Piccadilly Theatre. We secured the rising young Peter Hall as director, and a cast that included Dame Peggy Ashcroft as Julia, Emlyn Williams as The Author and Alan Webb as Janos Kadar. The last months were tense ones for all of us. First came the news that Nagy and Maleter had been executed. Then Radio Budapest began its attack on the play, thus assuring us that the other side knew just what we were doing. Then unconfirmed rumors reached us that Julia Rajk too had been executed, and on opening night we still did not know. The press was huge, and divided. Among the critics there were of course those instant authorities on the Hungarian Revolution who objected to my characterization of Laszlo Rajk, or found it shameful that I had failed to credit the Socialist Party for its role in the uprising (it had played no part whatsoever). The press, however, was on the whole friendly and in a sense did not matter. With a cast like mine you could fill any West End theater to watch the worst rubbish in London.

Yet nothing much happened. A bit dazed, Emlyn Williams and Dame Peggy reported to the theater every night hoping for the best. Neither had played within memory to anything but packed audiences. But you could not have filled the Piccadilly Theatre with less than the aid of the London police wielding nightsticks. The London run did, however, achieve something. On October 18, 1958, eleven days after the opening, Radio Budapest announced that Mrs. Rajk had been released from prison and had returned with her son to Budapest. Her friends had guessed right.

Shadow of Heroes was for me an experience of considerable reward, since I had

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set myself a playwriting chore verging on the improbable, and achieved a truly playable play. But a stark conclusion could not be evaded, that there existed no significant audience who cared to see it. Later productions in Germany and the United States followed precisely the London pattern. In New York, the all-important New York *Times* review was enough to set the normal play up for the better part of a season. But not this play. Never an outright failure, yet never a success, the play acquired a certain fame. It acquired everything, in truth, except audiences.

I have listened to endless speculation as to why this should be. A favored explanation is that the free world acquired a guilt about Hungary and does not want to be reminded of the subject. The explanation seems reasonable, but comes up against the repeated experience that when the play is presented on television, it is regularly successful. One may speculate that people don't mind guilt if they don't have to pay for it. A more practical speculation might be that the play's form, while suitable for another medium, is unsuitable for the stage. But if this be so, then many an actor of long experience has been triumphantly mistaken, and many a knowledgeable financial backer has lost his shirt betting on an animal that generically had no relation to the horse.

What happened to that bit of driftwood, *Shadow of Heroes,* is of no specific importance to the theater's mainstream. But I tend to believe that by 1958—or by 1961, when it was presented in New York—no significant audience for a play of this sort had survived. I have emphasized that a theater is a union of artists and an audience for whom the work of the artist is meaningful. By these late dates new alliances had been formed, new unions forged, and a play such as mine appeared a living fossil appealing only to the nostalgia of those—usually professionals—with long theatrical memories. If *Jeb* in a sense was a play twenty years ahead of its time, *Shadow of Heroes* in another sense was a play twenty years too late.

By these years, of course, the Theater of Self-Pity was scarcely unique among the arts. The inspired raging of an Osborne was now a thin, shrill voice indistinguishable from the lesser rages of an assemblage of poets, novelists, essayists. The genius of a Williams was overwhelmed by the multitude: a multitude of sensation-sellers (and no ware is so easily manufactured) crowding the marketplace not only of the spoken and written word, but of music and painting as well. Along with the antistory, the antinovel, the antihero, a mood of antiphilosophy spread out from the arts to embrace common thought itself (or, who knows, may have originated in common thought, in the first place, and have debased the arts). It was not a mood that could be long for this world. Of this we may be certain. Colin Wilson has described this as the Age of Defeat, and he is correct. Every symptomatic trend in the postwar arts has been that of the neurotic intellectual attracted and absorbed by defeat. But a young and vital species, *Homo sapiens,* cannot long linger, whatever the romance, with prospects of suicide.

All is speculative. Only historical perspective gained a century from today can begin to assess what happened with men in the decades immediately following Hiroshima. I am neither an historian of such impossible perspective, nor am I even an intellectual. I am a playwright. What brains I have are at the disposal of my intuitions. And what brains I have inform me that this was a hell of a time in which to present a play called *Shadow of Heroes.*

The *théâtre engagé* (and these pages must bear testimony) faced hazards more painful than merely those of an aberrant time. Above all, there was the challenge of translating into terms that could endure the reality of the times in which we were engaged. We accepted the timeless disciplines of art—universality placed upon diversity, emotion reviewed in tranquility. We accepted our role as storytellers, which had certainly emerged around Cro-Magnon and perhaps even earlier Neanderthal hearths, to assert the verities of eternity as opposed to the improbabilities of tonight

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and tomorrow. We conceived of this as the artist's job. And so for a brief little moment there existed a theater such as ours.

We explored it; none of us can claim to have done more. None of us attained a mastery of such a theater's potentialities or a sophistication regarding its pitfalls. Yet for the playwright it was a theater of ultimate excitement, ultimate beckonings, ultimate creative reward. Playwright and audience were united in a theatrical citizenship of purpose and passion. That a turn of history, a turn of fashion, a confusion of philosophies, a vanishment of playwrights, perhaps even a world become temporarily bored with itself—that all may have combined to place our kind of theater on a warehouse shelf is no matter for mourning. Our most ancient of arts has met and survived far worse.

There are hints today—in the success of a very few plays like *The Deputy* and *The Investigation,* and of a few theatrical productions likewise of European origin making slight pretension as works of art—that something may again be astir in the world of the theater. But so far the events have been random, audiences have been irregular, few genuine talents have been revealed, and the plays themselves while of contemporary significance have dealt for the most part with times more past than present. Certainly no common voices have yet been raised in a common tune. And most certainly, so far, creative America has remained aloof.

I tend, myself, nevertheless, to believe that even though it be decades from now, when on some bright accidental morning playwrights of stature again come streaming out of every side street, and when the indulgent pastimes of sensation and self-pity will long ago have outworn their welcome, then the temptations of a theater engaged with its times will be one that few audiences, few playwrights, can long resist.

The Blow-Up: Sorting Things Out

CHARLES THOMAS SAMUELS

For an esoteric director, Michelangelo Antonioni inspired surprising publicity when *Blow-Up* opened at New York's Coronet Theatre. Spoken in English, produced by a big American company, *Blow-Up* became "copy" for columnists who had formerly ignored the dour Italian and his art-house masterpieces. Now much was heard of the absence of Monica Vitti (Antonioni's favorite leading lady) and of the artistic consequences of that fact. With each passing interview, new parts of London were added to the list of those actually painted by Antonioni in his search for expressive color. While to Rex Reed, who sketched the director in poison ink for the Sunday *Times,* Antonioni's zeal was mere arrogance; to M. G. M., it was integrity. When the director refused to make deletions required for a Production Code seal, the studio staunchly supported him. Yet when the flap subsided, M. G. M. hid behind its subsidiary, Premier Productions, declining to acknowledge its sponsorship so as to avoid offending those Catholics who had wanted the film banned. In his review, Bosley Crowther voiced concern lest the publicity attract the wrong audience. But while saving *Blow-Up* from the prurient, Crowther invited another Philistine response: the film was a mystery; he would not unveil its plot.

That Antonioni might have a plot to reveal was as novel an idea as that he might attract the masses. But soon the Coronet Theatre seemed as crowded as the Music

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Hall. To make matters more confusing, *Blow-Up* was admired by Crowther and Judith Crist, *Time* and the *Saturday Review,* but disliked by many reviewers for more intellectual journals. Several of the latter split off from the New York Film Critics just in time to give *Blow-Up* the annual prize bestowed by their more conventional colleagues on *A Man for All Seasons,* but the most influential members of the new group (Brendan Gill, Pauline Kael and John Simon) all disparaged the film.

Before long, Crowther's restrained synopsis turned into a joke. A few critics now denied that *Blow-Up* had a plot; others denied that it articulated a meaning. William Zinsser (in *Look*) provided an appropriate apex for the controversy by proclaiming *Blow-Up*—along with *The Homecoming* and Andrew Wyeth!—an example of art meant not to be understood but only experienced.

Were *Blow-Up* less significant and Antonioni less revolutionary, the imbroglio I have sketched would merely support Dwight Macdonald's warning about cults in collision. But because Antonioni has done more to define cinema than probably any director since Eisenstein, the critcism afforded *Blow-Up* tells a good deal about current consideration of the art.

Some critics, notably Stanley Kauffmann and Ian Cameron, have accurately described Antonioni's effort to disentangle cinema from theater, but they have not perceived the radical lengths to which he has gone. Every important director, from popular artists like Hitchcock to serious *auteurs* like Kurosawa and Bergman, has exploited cinema's unique ability both to imprison the spectator in the lens's grip and to free him through speed and scope of movement; but Antonioni stands alone in making the visual image his fundamental mode of expression. He does not tell a story; he presents gestures and tableaux. He does not explore characters; he moves figures through a landscape. Yet, although his films are filled with things to look at, he does not shoot scenery.

To begin with: plot. Antonioni's plots are really antiplots, since his characters are chronically unable to engage in productive action. Thus, in *L'Avventura,* Claudia and Sandro cannot truly search for his lost fiancée because they cannot truly care whether she *is* found. In *La Notte,* the unhappily married protagonists accomplish nothing in their long, eventful day, while the lovers' appointment in *Eclipse* is never, so far as we can tell, kept. Giuliana, of *Red Desert,* performs the one significant act in Antonioni, but that is only a spiritual adjustment to the modern world. Plot suspense is utterly avoided; our desire for knowledge focuses on character.

But not on character as unique personage, with determinant past and significant future. Antonioni's people are simply what we see, which is why they are always defined by dead-end jobs. Sandro, once an architect, is now an appraiser; while Giovanni, in *La Notte,* is a writer who doubts the possibility of another book. The sensitive heroine of *Eclipse* is doomed to the soulless and the secondhand: her lover works for the stock exchange, while she translates for a living. Even Giuliana has a depleting job, that of full-time neurotic. Unlike characters in other works that are similarly focused, Antonioni's do not develop. Their stories show them assuming a role—Claudia becoming Sandro's lover—or understanding the roles they have always played—Sandro facing his emptiness.

Since Antonioni's characters do not really engage in action and do not radically change, their inward fixity calls for a new kind of film movement. Whereas most directors move your eye across the surface of the action, Antonioni tries to move your eye into its depths. For most directors, a close-up represents, as it were, the locus of event and dialogue. In Antonioni, events occur behind faces, which express themselves not in dialogue but in gesture: a flick of the eye, a grimace. Antonioni's close-ups must be "read." Furthermore, whereas most directors bombard the spectator with images or hurl him through space, Antonioni holds his eye in front of carefully composed scenes.

This last characteristic is the heart of

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Antonioni's method. A director who emphasizes action will photograph the background as an agent; as, for example, Hitchcock photographs the windshield wipers of Janet Leigh's car in *Psycho:* normal servants turned by the plot into menacing blades. A director who explores character will arrange the background into an "objective correlative"; as, for example, Fellini does in *8½*. Antonioni handles decor in neither way. In his films, the background does not enhance or reflect the foreground but rather interacts with and interprets it.

In his first important film, *L'Avventura,* the two main female characters are established by the simplest visual means: Anna, who has dark hair and scowls a great deal, represents withdrawal from society to which blond, always smiling Claudia is innocently attracted. In the film's second scene, Anna leaves Claudia inspecting a Roman square while she deliberately stages a test of her love for Sandro. As we watch Anna's face disgustedly receiving Sandro's caress, we see the nullity of their relationship and, since we shall later see the faces of Sandro and Claudia turning in the same erotic dance, we preview the essential anonymity of relationships in this world.

That Claudia is destined to replace her, Anna realizes when, with a smirk, she forces Claudia to wear her blouse in the subsequent yachting scene. This image must come back to our minds when, at Taormina, Claudia playfully dons a black wig, accepting a life in which identities may so easily be changed. In the film's last scene, when Claudia is herself replaced by a common whore, she has no moral force left from which to condemn the fickle Sandro. Now totally sophisticated, she can only join him in a gesture of resignation at their common incapacity for commitment.

The plot, or aborted action, of *L'Avventura* advances by means of visual analogies and small appearances; Antonioni can spend seconds shooting Claudia as she sits exhaustedly in the train station where she hopes to escape Sandro's tempting importunities. Above her head, in this actionless scene, are some pictures of madonnas. The moment's meaning is a contrast between the despair registered on Claudia's face and the serenity in the pictures. This is how Antonioni's decor interacts with and interprets the characters.

It also helps to establish the significance of their behavior through visual symbols and allusions, like the modernist devices of *The Waste Land* or *The Magic Mountain,* that realize Antonioni's modernist themes: lovelessness, paralysis of will, loss of faith. Fundamentally, *L'Avventura* contains an implied parallel with the *Odyssey,* which mostly took place in the same Sicilian locale, and which provides the Western mind with its definitive image of adventure and search. The point of the comparison, of course, is that the modern quest, indifferent to its object, must turn inward. Thus Antonioni fills the background with symbols of former validity to point up their debasement in the modern world. I will cite only a few examples. Patrizia, the yacht's owner, works a jigsaw puzzle of a classic scene while the playboy Raimondo fondles her breast in a gesture that is "unreproved, if undesired." On the island, while searching for Anna, the modern Romans find an ancient amphora, and after some humorously uncomprehending guesses about its possible function, Raimondo carelessly lets it fall. The *carabinieri* to whom Sandro goes at Messina are housed in a baroque palace before whose splendid marble walls they have set up ugly wooden slabs to form an office.

Throughout the island sequence, Antonioni is careful to train his cameras on the rocks so that the humans are always seen entering large barren areas, as if they come too late and too punily to dominate the alien landscape. For their humanity has been wrecked by a cultural debacle in which, as in much modern literature, a debilitated pursuit of pleasure competes with activities that had traditionally nurtured the soul. This theme, which gives the meager events their large significance, permeates the film. On the church tower at Noto, for example, when Sandro asks Claudia to marry him, she refuses a proposal so lightly made by ringing the bells which actualize attunement. The Sicilian men

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milling about Claudia with sidewise lust are visually counterpointed by the choirboys marching in orderly sexlessness from the cathedral. The Sicilian journey progresses through a culture in ruins (symbolized by the succession of church towers progressively abandoned and incomplete—one without a bell), coming to rest at Taormina, haunt of the rich, before a shattered building of which all that remains is a ruined tower and a fragment of facade.

Because *L'Avventura* shows an unformed girl realizing her latent sophistication, it comes closer than any of Antonioni's films to presenting a character in transition. Although we know little about Claudia (except that she was born poor), we can sympathize with her decline. Thus *L'Avventura,* Antonioniesque though it be, is moving in a conventional way. The later films are more representational in their enactment of cultural malaise, their characters are more fully symbolic, and their effect is more sensory and intellectual.

In *L'Avventura,* although hints exist only to demonstrate the deterioration that is modern worldliness, we learn something not only of Claudia's but of Sandro's past. Once a creator of buildings, Sandro now merely measures their cost. When he vindictively spills ink on the young boy's sketch of the cathedral at Noto, the personal and public meanings of Sandro's behavior merge; he is both a success reacting against lost innocence and modern man reacting against lost faith. In *La Notte,* we do not know why Giovanni can no longer write; the personal drama now merely illustrates the public meaning of a day that begins with the death of an intellectual and ends at an industrialist's party. Similarly, we do not know why Giovanni and Lydia have fallen out of love. Their unhappiness is not explained; it is merely displayed.

To establish Lydia's feelings, for example, Antonioni shoots the famous walking scene in which Lydia's state of mind is revealed through her reactions to a postman eating a sandwich, some fighting youths, a man firing off rockets, *et cetera.* Stopped clocks and flaking walls suggest the era's sickness; later, at the party, Antonioni achieves one of his best visual symbols of deterioration by showing the industrialist's cat staring fixedly at a Roman portrait bust. "Maybe he's waiting for him to wake up," the millionaire's wife announces. "Try and figure cats out." When Giovanni takes Lydia to a night club, they witness the erotic dance of two splendid Negroes; but the act turns out to be acrobatic, concluding when the female manages to get her legs around a glass of water. Milan's sterility is highlighted at the party which becomes vital only when a rainstorm strikes.

With few exceptions (the explicit last scene or some excessive business at the party), *La Notte* dramatizes its insights subtly. But the film is impure. As if frightened by its increased abstractness, Antonioni relies too heavily on dialogue to clarify his points; and, as we might expect from an artist who thinks with his eyes, the dialogue is banal.

Eclipse is more abstract than *La Notte,* heightening its emphasis on meaningful gesture and replacing dialogue, as often as possible, with expressive natural sound. Vittoria, the heroine, is even less explained than Giovanni and Lydia. We never learn why she has broken off her first affair or why she takes up with Piero. Although she has a job, it is minimally emblematic, whereas the jobs of Sandro and Giovanni represent obvious spiritual problems. Vittoria is created almost exclusively through what she does. She constantly fusses with flowers or disports herself with the primitive and the natural. These meanings come together when Vittoria is fascinated by one of the men who is wiped out by the stock market slide. Whereas the other investors sweat and fan themselves furiously, rush around, or, like Vittoria's mother, blasphemously turn religion to the service of Mammon, this man exits calmly. Vittoria follows him to a café, where he orders a drink and writes intently on a piece of paper. When he leaves, dropping the paper behind him, she retrieves it. It is covered with flowers. She is delighted. This is the moment before she begins her affair with Piero.

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Living in a sterile modern world, Vittoria seeks escape on an airplane ride above the clouds, as well as through love. When down to earth in Piero's arms, however, she learns that people nowadays care only for things. The liveliest, noisest scenes in *Eclipse* take place at the stock exchange (significantly, built in the ruins of a Roman temple), where men sweatingly pursue goods that truly excite them. But, try as they may to stir it, the air cannot cool their agitated bodies. Only above the clouds, or in one small moment when the Exchange halts out of respect for a deceased broker, does the air quicken; during that unique respite from noise in the ruined temple, a large overhead fan, like a propeller, whirs freely.

Setting aside *Red Desert* for the moment, this brief survey of Antonioni's films should suggest the atmosphere of *Blow-Up*. Yet faced with a murder witnessed by a photographer, Bosley Crowther inevitably recalled the Hitchcock of *Rear Window,* and this utterly misleading comparison has been perpetuated by many critics. In fact, the antiplot of *Blow-Up* is *vero Antonioni.**

Like *L'Avventura, Blow-Up* concerns the search for something that is never found. As in *La Notte,* the peripatetic hero fails to accomplish anything. Like the other protagonists, the photographer is the embodiment of a role, although here he is so fully defined by his function that he is not even named. As in Antonioni's other films, the climax is reached when the protagonist comes to face his own impotence. There is even a concluding disappearance that recalls the absence of Vittoria and Piero from the last minutes of *Eclipse:* as the camera slowly draws away from the photographer, he slowly diminishes in size, an effect made more significant when Antonioni literally causes him to vanish before "the end."

The events in *Blow-Up* dramatize the same theme one finds in Antonioni's other films. The photographer, a creature of work and pleasure but of no inner force or loyalty, is unable to involve himself in life. He watches it, manipulates it; but, like all of Antonioni's male characters, he has no sense of life's purpose. Thus, when faced with a challenge, he cannot decisively act. Unable to transcend himself, except through ultimate confrontation with his soul, he represents modern paralysis.

Most reviewers have denied that this or any other theme is apparent in *Blow-Up,* while those few who believed that Antonioni was up to something were either uncertain or wrong, I think, about what it was. Since Antonioni demands closer attention than even professional film watchers are likely to be familiar with, and since reviewers usually have the sketchiest knowledge of a serious director's canon, the errors are not surprising. But what are we to make of the critical misconceptions perpetrated by John Simon?

* The Julio Cortázar short story on which *Blow-Up* is loosely based considers a question only hinted at in the film: does art have metaphysical and moral power over reality? Cortázar's hero is an amateur photographer but a professional translator, and the first part of his story is a characteristic dissertation on the difficulty of representing life in words.

The main event is the hero's encounter with a young boy and an older, blond woman in the square of an island in the Seine. Thinking he witnesses an act of sexual initiation, he takes a photograph. But when the woman asks that it be returned, an older man, who had been watching the scene from a car, interrupts their altercation. During the argument, the boy escapes, convincing the translator that, despite his meddling, "taking the photo had been a good act." When he returns home and blows up the photograph, however, he concludes that the older woman was apparently seducing the boy for the man. Revolted by what he has witnessed, the photographer now imaginatively relives the experience, trying to release the boy from the imagined horror just as he had released him from the actual scene.

Antonioni's transformations are nearly total: the ages of the couple are reversed, she becomes dark-haired, the scene takes place in a garden rather than a square, seduction becomes murder. More important, the art theme is made peripheral (by introducing a literal artist as a foil to the commercial, mechanical photographer), while Antonioni focuses on the social context that he invents for the episode. I can think of no better way to illustrate the profoundly social orientation of Antonioni.

Notice, too, that whereas Cortázar's hero never discovers whether his "good act" was really effectual, Antonioni's photographer learns that he accomplished nothing. Cortázar's territory is the imagination, where fabulous victories match equally fabulous defeats; Antonioni's world is sadly, unconquerably real.

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Simon is, in my opinion, the best American film critic now writing. Expectedly, he was the one critic who saw the need to summarize *Blow-Up*'s events; yet in his exhaustive resumé, he missed the crucial moments. As a result, he determined that Antonioni's theme was Pirandellian, despite the total absence of any metaphysical concern in the director's other work. Together with the common emphasis on Hitchcock, this Pirandellian analogy has done a great deal to obfuscate Antonioni's meaning.

Because the body vanishes, and because the photographer ultimately hears a tennis ball that doesn't exist, some people have thought that Antonioni means us to question the existence of the corpse. Incidental details such as the photographer's initial appearance as a bum who surprisingly enters a Rolls Royce have been cited in support of this interpretation. Yet the point of the first scene is that the photographer *isn't* a bum, that he took part in the doss-house life merely to exploit it for his picture book. The body exists; what is significant is that the photographer didn't realize he'd seen it.

When the narrator enters the park, we see him performing his first spontaneous gesture. Emerging from the antique shop, he notices it and, for no apparent reason, enters. Perhaps he is attracted by the lush greenness, the melodically rustling leaves. Chancing on the love ballet, however, the photographer responds automatically, according to a settled routine. Love, as his agent, Ron, later tells him, would make a "truer" conclusion to his picture book. But when the girl tries to get his film and a young man (apparently the murderer) peers through the restaurant window at his lunch with Ron, the photographer begins to suspect that he has witnessed something less than innocent. After the girl leaves his studio, he blows up the photographs; and it is here, I think, that Simon and every other critic I have read misinterpret the action.

What happens is this: While the photographer is studying the shots, he spies something suspicious in the still of some shrubbery behind a fence. What he does not see but what the audience does, as Antonioni's lens pans across the row of blow-ups, is the still showing a body. The audience, but not the photographer, knows that a body exists. (When Vanessa Redgrave ran away from the photographer during the park scene, she stopped to look down at the tree, from behind which a head was unmistakably visible.) But the photographer chooses to blow up only the still showing the murderer and his gun. Exulting in what he thinks is a meaningful action, he rushes to the phone to call his agent. "Somebody was trying to kill somebody else," he says, "I saved his life."

That the photographer jumps to this erroneous conclusion despite contrary evidence is logical in view of subtle but clear hints we got earlier of a latent dissatisfaction with his normal mode of behavior. His studio is dominated by photographs of a sky diver and a skin diver, his living room by a shot of camels (recalling a similar photograph in *Eclipse*), and he clearly would like to get away. Vittoria made her frail gesture in a plane; the photographer buys a propeller. Lydia had gone on a solitary walk; the photographer, so far as he knows, takes a stroll in the park. As he tells his agent, "I've gone off London this week. Doesn't do anything for me. I'm fed up with those bloody bitches. Wish I had tons of money, then I'd be free."

Freedom and mastery are cheaply purchased when the photographer allows himself to believe he has saved a man's life. Had he done so, his action would have symbolized a separation from the aimless mod world. What he witnessed, as he believes, was the attempt by a young swinger to murder a gray-haired, older man in a garden. Catching the snake hidden in the bushes, the photographer had preserved the intended victim. The fact of the matter is different.

While on the phone with Ron, he hears a noise at the door. Apparently suspecting the murderer, he opens it surreptitiously; in tumble two teeny-boppers. Although he had previously expressed contempt for these "bloody bitches," he now becomes involved with them. Meanwhile Ron rings

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off. When the girls, who have come for some exploitation of their own, begin to undress before a clothes-rack, the photographer seizes the opportunity. An orgy ensues, and here Antonioni works his most audacious trick.*

While the photographer is romping with the girls (avidly attended by any normal spectator), for perhaps five seconds, in the upper right hand corner of the frame, above the purple paper, we see a man dressed like the murderer, watching them. Antonioni then cuts to the girls as they are pulling on the photographer's clothes, and the photographer, who is sitting up, now notices the shot he had previously overlooked. Much to their chagrin, he ejects the teeny-boppers, blows up the fatal still, and learns that he had saved nothing.

However, instead of calling the police, asking for help, or in any way dealing with what he now realizes, he returns to the park to prove that the murder took place (although in calling his agent, he had acted far more precipitately with no more evidence). Back at the park, he sees the body; but behind him he hears a click, as of a gun or camera, and he runs away. Again, he does not go for the police. Instead, he returns to his studio and looks longingly at the propeller, an old part without a plane, lying on a white floor—useless. He then goes to his friend's apartment, where he is shocked to find the wife fixing her attention upon him while having intercourse with her husband.

Reentering his studio, he discovers that the blowups have been stolen, presumably by the man who entered during the orgy sequence. After a brief, apparently fruitless conversation with his friend's wife, he takes off in his car. While driving, he thinks he sees the murderer's accomplice; but his attempt to chase her degenerates into his meaningless involvement with an absurd experience at a rock 'n roll club. Once again, he has recourse to his agent; but he finds Ron in a marijuana trance, which he soon joins. In the last scene, returning to the park, he discovers that the murderer has made off with the body. He has accomplished nothing.

For he is part of his world. Hiding behind a tree, like the murderer, he shot with a camera what the latter shot with a gun; and he did not save the older man. He is blond, and so is the murderer. For all his aloof contempt, he is as frivolous as the mod clowns who frame his experience. In the last scene, when he hears their "tennis ball," he effectively actualizes the charade existence that they share in common. His final gesture of resignation—like Sandro's tears, Giovanni's loveless copulation, or Piero's and Vittoria's failure to meet—shows clearly that the photographer cannot change.

The actions I have sketched are nearly pantomimed; their larger implications are also established through visual means. As with the *carabinieri*'s office in *L'Avventura,* the first shot in *La Notte* (showing a graceful old building standing in front of Pirelli's glass box), the forbidding sleekness of E.U.R. in *Eclipse,* Antonioni fills the background in *Blow-Up* with examples of tradition being razed to make way for a grey, anonymous wasteland. As the photographer drives through London, the camera pans along the colorful walls of the old city only to be abruptly lost in blank space surrounding a new housing project—all grays and browns. When he visits the antique shop, scouting real estate for his agent, he advises purchase since the neighborhood seems to have attracted homosexuals—those great contemporary buyers of the past. The old caretaker, however, refuses to sell him anything, but the young mod owner is only too anxious to turn the shop into cash for a trip to Nepal, where she hopes to escape

* This detail is perhaps a shade too audacious, but there is precedent for it in *L'Avventura.* When Anna disappears, she leaves two books behind her: the Bible and *Tender is the Night.* We get a brief glimpse of the latter, which I presume was meant to hint at Anna's relationship with her father and thus help establish a motive for her disappearance. Thus we have the father's response when Claudia gives him both volumes: "This looks like a good sign. Don't you think so? As far as I'm concerned, anyone who reads the Bible could not have committed an act of impropriety." (This, like all passages from the first three films, is quoted from *Screenplays of Michelangelo Antonioni.* New York, 1963.)

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from the antiques. "Nepal is all antiques," the photographer dryly observes.

The modern world, however, seems bent on destroying its traditions. On the wall of the photographer's apartment, an old Roman tablet is overwhelmed by the hallucinatory violence of the modern painting at its side. More important, traditional human pursuits are being drained of their force. Politics is now playacting; a pacifist parade marches by with signs bearing inscriptions like "No," or "On. On. On." or "Go away." Pleasure is narcotizing, whether at the "pot" party or in the rock 'n roll club. Love is unabsorbing, as the photographer learns from his friend's marriage. Art has lost its validity. Murder is ignored.

These last implications are forcefully portrayed in the film's main scenes of human interaction. The first of these scenes shows the photographer visiting his friend Bill, who is a painter. When the hero enters his flat, the painter is standing affectedly before a large canvas. Attempting to engage the photographer's interest, he explains his condition:

> They don't mean anything when I do them, just a mess. Afterward, I find something to hang onto [pointing]—like that leg. Then it all sorts itself out; it's like finding a clue in a detective story.

Although we are likely to find Bill rather pretentious, particularly in view of the obviously derivative nature of his painting, the photographer seems unusually impressed. When the painter's wife enters, he tells her that he has wanted to buy one of the canvases. When we see her massaging his neck with obvious interest on her part but mere friendly comfort on his, we know what this oasis of art and domesticity might mean to a man so cynical and frenetic. Later, in his puzzlement concerning the murder, when he turns to them for help, he discovers that the oasis is dry.

In the second important scene, the murderer's accomplice meets the photographer at his studio because he blew his car horn when he reached his street so as to inform the pursuers of his whereabouts. When he tries to calm her, she replies:

> "My private life is already in a mess. It would be a disaster—"
>
> P: "So what? Nothing like a little disaster for sorting things out."

Through turning sparse, functional dialogue into a system of verbal echoes, Antonioni achieves the economy of tight verse. Yet he does not sacrifice naturalness. The painter, in an observation appropriate to the scene, had suggested that visual experience is comprehensible only through recollection, during which process it performs the function of a clue that helps to "sort things out." The photographer, in a casual remark to the girl, asserts that the sorting out process is facilitated by disaster. This verbal cross-reference points to the meaning behind the action.

The most subtle use of dialogue occurs in a sequence which has been either ignored or misinterpreted as a sign that Antonioni's theme is failure of communication. When the painter's wife enters his studio, she comes upon a distraught man; he has lost his evidence and his faith in his friends. Although laconically, they do communicate:

> P: "Do you ever think of leaving [your husband]?"
> W: "No, I don't think so."
> P: [Turning away with annoyance] "I saw a man killed this morning."
> W: "Where? Was he shot?"
> P: "Sort of a park."
> W: "Are you sure?"
> P: "He's still there."
> W: "Who was he?"
> P: "Someone."
> W: "How did it happen?"
> P: "I don't know. I didn't see."
> W: [Bewildered] "You didn't see?"
> P: [Wry grimace] "No."
> W: "Shouldn't you call the police?"
> P: [Pointing to the one still the murderer didn't take] "That's the body."
> W: "Looks like one of Bill's paintings. [Turning to him, helplessly] Will you help me? I don't know what to do. [He doesn't react. She looks at the shot.] What is it? Hmmmm. I wonder why they shot him."
> P: "I didn't ask."
> W: [Looks up at him, smiles sadly, and, after some hesitation, leaves.]

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I record this dialogue to show how clearly and economically Antonioni establishes his meaning.* When the painter's wife comes to his apartment, she hears the photographer's confession of failure and declares her own. Bill's art is no alternative to the destruction symbolized by the murder; his art is another version of it. They can no more deal with their marriage than the photographer can deal with the crime. She can only slink away in compassion for their mutual impotence, leaving him to futile pursuit, marijuana, and his depressing moment of truth.

In *Blow-Up,* as in *Eclipse* and *L'Avventura*'s island sequence, Antonioni achieves his meanings through the use of sound effects as well as speech. When the photographer shoots his model in a parody of intercourse, and when he poses the mannequins, music, as he says, is "noise" to inspire their artificial vitality. When Vanessa Redgrave comes to his apartment, fresh from the murder, he tries to teach her the lesson that music maintains one's "cool." While giving her some "pot," to which she sensuously yields herself, he shows her that really to enjoy it and the taped jazz he is playing, she must hold herself back—draw slowly and keep time against the beat. Before he begins to inspect the blowups, he turns the jazz on. But the music quickly fades when he becomes involved; as he looks deeply into the frames, we hear on the sound track a rustling of leaves.

The incredible greenness of a park that was the ironic setting for murder suggests another of Antonioni's means. When the photographer discovers the body's loss, he looks up at the tree, whose leaves now rattle angrily, and sees the leaves as black against a white sky. Like the sound analogies and the verbal cross-references, the color in *Blow-Up* aids comprehension.

The film is composed mainly in four hues: black, white, green and purple. The hero's studio is black and white, as are most of his clothes and those of Vanessa Redgrave. So too are photographs. In fact, the meaning of the event in the park was "as clear as black and white" before he photographed it, which is what makes for significance in his initial failure of perception as well as in his underlying failure to understand the implication of his way of life. The green park was penetrated by evil. Suitably, the door of the photographer's dark room, in which he brings to light the dark deed, is also green. Not, however, until he copulates with the teeny-boppers in a sea of purple does he realize that he did not prevent the crime. Appropriately, the door to the room in which he blows up the fatal still is also purple. One of the teeny-boppers wears purple tights; the other, green.

Colorful though it is, *Blow-Up* seems to be moving toward colorlessness, black and white—almost as if Antonioni were trying to make us face the skull beneath the painted flesh. But that is not what most reviewers have done. That they should, if my reading is correct, have missed the film's meaning so completely is a phenomenon almost as significant as the film itself. What, after all, does their error tell us?

The familiar things are aspects of a fixed condition. As I have said, few reviewers know the director's work; fewer still have sophisticated ideas about film art. Their collective sophistication, if not their intelligence, is modest; when they simulate brilliance, it is only through the perfervid prose we associate with *Time* magazine. I doubt that many serious readers would choose books on the advice of the same sources to which, *faute de mieux,* they are forced to turn for evaluation of films. This much, I think, is sadly inarguable, but not limited to consideration of *avant-garde* film-making in general or Antonioni in particular.

* The dialogue at the "pot" party is equally clear. After great difficulty, the photographer succeeds in getting Ron to listen to his problem:

P: "Someone's been killed."
R: "O.K."
P: "Listen, those pictures I took in the park—[No response] I want you to see the corpse. We've got to get a shot of it."
R: [Bewildered] "I'm not a photographer."
P: [Bitterly] "I am."
R: [Nonplussed] "What did you see in that park?"
P: [Resignedly] "Nothing." [Ron, who can't focus his eyes well, motions the photographer to follow him. The photographer does. Next scene shows him waking up from the debauch.]

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The confusion about Antonioni comes from the unusual demands he makes. Most films are to be looked at; Antonioni's are to be inspected. Decades of film as a commercial form of escapism have atrophied our perception; like all great artists, Antonioni insists that we see anew. Unfortunately, most reviewers can't see. Although many disguised their ineptitude by reporting little of what goes on in *Blow-Up,* distressing errors of fact tend to characterize the more venturesome accounts. Thus one reviewer (Richard Corliss, *National Review*) has the photographer buying an oar, while another (Joseph Morgenstern, *Newsweek*) has the orgy spread out on sky-blue paper. John Simon thinks the painter is unmarried (although Sarah Miles clearly sports a wedding ring) and suggests that the photographer makes eyes at her, whereas the reverse is true. As a result of such errors, he can give no accurate reading of the subplot. John Coleman (*New Statesman*) loftily deems *Blow-Up* a "very superficial film . . . about people reckoned as leading superficial lives"; but since he asserts that the photographer saw the body and the gun *after* the orgy sequence, Coleman is in no position to call anyone superficial.

Such errors of fact are less important in themselves than as manifestations of a cavalier attitude toward Antonioni's difficult style. More than their mistakes, the arrogance of reviewers is what rankles. Confronted with a famously complex director whose films are widely acknowledged to be important, the journeyman critic, both here and in England, treats *Blow-Up* as if it were indeed a mechanical piece of Hitchcock. Despite museum cults, the emergence of cinema's right to be considered a form of art is notoriously recent. A parallel growth in movie reviewing is long overdue.

Among critics, the sources of confusion is more profound. Misunderstanding *Blow-Up* is not only failure to scrutinize with sufficient care a highly wrought method of expression; it is the consequence of some false, but currently powerful, ideas about the nature of art. Although these ideas are more blatantly damaging with an art form so ill-defined as cinema, they have their origin in wider cultural presuppositions.

The first of them, to use Norman Podhoretz's phrase, is the demand that art "bring the news." Widespread dissatisfaction with contemporary fiction, lack of interest in poetry, and the inflation of nonfictional forms like the book review all indicate the dominance of this aesthetic program. Thus Norman Mailer's lucubrations attain significance because he styles himself a social prophet, confessional poetry becomes the accepted fashion in verse, and nonfiction, a form defined by what it isn't, now begins to absorb whatever it lacks.

From the neonaturalist perspective, *Blow-Up* is offensive because it manipulates the materials of contemporary London to express not the city but Antonioni's version of modern life. If one can bear the hip language—not unrelated to the ideas—he can see this attitude clearly expressed in Richard Goldstein's article in the *Village Voice,* entitled "The Screw-Up." Condemning a lack of "understanding that can only be called Parental," Goldstein insists that Antonioni misrepresents the swinging Samarkand and derides the film for the expressiveness that—*autres temps, autres moeurs*—would have guaranteed its status as a work of art. Whatever can be said for such documentary emphasis, it easily degenerates into mindless fixation on the up-to-date. That people old enough to know better don't avoid the trap can be seen in Pauline Kael's review, where, amidst a veritable fusillade, she criticizes Antonioni for not catching "the humor and fervor and astonishing speed in youth's rejection of older values." Godard, *sì!* Antonioni, *no!*

The other new aesthetic barbarism has quickly filtered down to its rightful level, having been recently promoted, as I have remarked, by the arts editor of *Look*. Given a more respectable formulation by Susan Sontag, Richard Gilman and other less conspicuous gurus, the conception of art as "sensuous form" might seem a useful antidote to excess verisimilitude, but it comes to much the same thing. Like those who wish art to be a form of sociology, the advocates of a "new sensibility" reveal a fatal

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affinity for what's "in." Thus Miss Sontag finds that formal heights are scaled by happenings, pornography and science fiction, while critics like Gilman opt for novels (promoted by magazines like the *New Yorker*) in which insouciance becomes art by imitating the era's bafflement. (Collusion between the documentary and noninterpretive definitions of art was nicely indicated by the appearance of Robert Garis's review —which argues that the film is good because it is "exciting to watch"—in *Commentary*.)

One error encourages the sentimental social pieties of some reviewers; the other authorizes their imperception. Thus reviews of *Blow-Up* express outraged social optimism or a kind of aesthetic trance induced by globules of "surface beauty." The skillful creation of symbols for insight—art, in short—becomes an achievement of negligible appeal.

A third aesthetic error (born, in part, out of reaction against the other two), despite a devotion to artistic seriousness, runs the risk of blocking new modes. John Simon is rightly opposed to art without discursive implications or rational validity. In *Hudson Review* pieces concerning Albee, Pinter, and thinkers like McLuhan and N. O. Brown, Simon shows himself a powerful demolition machine for a culture besieged on all sides. But in his splendid assaults, he sometimes finds himself forced backward into old-fashioned demands for situational realism, pyschologically valid motivation, and humanistically oriented themes. These requirements should be suspended with considerably less alacrity than most critics now show, but they must be abandoned for those rare cases, like Borges, Beckett or Antonioni, in which authentic art is being produced in a new way. Significantly, Simon is receptive to such art when reviewing books—a further indication that people automatically relax their aesthetics when discussing films.

A similarly based lack of sympathy is detectable in the otherwise laudatory pieces on Antonioni's earlier films that Dwight Macdonald wrote for *Esquire*. Although Macdonald, along with Stanley Kauffmann, was one of Antonioni's few discerning American champions, he became displeased by the Italian's progressive refusal to motivate his characters. Even Kauffmann was made nervous by the abstractionism of *Eclipse,* although he rejoiced, wrongly as I think, in the colored abstractionism of *Red Desert*.

Still, despite a few hints of retrograde commitment, Simon, Kauffmann and Macdonald are the most sensitive of Antonioni's American critics and the most useful, intelligent film critics of recent times. The fumbling responses of their colleagues remind us that the always thinly staffed legion of competence is now threatened with depopulation. Macdonald has been replaced at *Esquire* by Wilfrid Sheed, while Pauline Kael has taken over from Kauffmann on the *New Republic*. (Fortunately, Kauffmann will review films for the *New American Review,* but only three times a year; and I suspect he will be pressed for space.)

As a novelist and book or theater critic, Wilfrid Sheed has behind him an estimable body of work. As a film critic, he has nothing—either in experience or rumination—a fact that he candidly admitted in his first *Esquire* piece. Despite his avowed respect for Antonioni's other films, his review of *Blow-Up* expresses nearly ruthless contempt. Much of the piece is not about the film at all, concentrating its attention instead (complete with feeble jokes about old musicals that Sheed *does* know) on Rex Reed's interview with Antonioni in the *Times*. The rest of his review repeats Judith Crist's complaint that Antonioni let a good story get away, Richard Goldstein's complaint that Antonioni didn't really capture London, and the blank raving about "surface beauty" that characterizes most other reviews. Finding the symbolism "nonorganic" and the ideas banal, Sheed disdains to argue either point.

Such offenses against criticism are compounded in Miss Kael's review by offenses against taste, logic and the reader's patience. In a piece so staggeringly verbose that one cannot, as in Sheed's case, attribute the lack of argument to lack of space, Miss

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Kael serves up that combination of personal exhibitionism, obsession with fashion, and irrelevant inside dope that has become her special ragout. She reviews not the film but the audience.*

Will *Blow-Up be* taken seriously in 1968 only by the same sort of cultural diehards who are still sending out five-page single-spaced letters on their interpretation of Marienbad? (No two are alike, no one interesting.) It has some of the Marienbad appeal: a friend phones for your opinion and when you tell him you didn't much care for it, he says, "You'd better see it again, I was at a swinging party the other night and it's all anybody ever talked about!" (Was *there ever a good movie that everybody was* talking about?) It probably won't blow over because it also has the *Morgan!-Georgy Girl* appeal; people identify with it so strongly, they get *upset* if you don't like it—as if you were rejecting not just the movie but *them.* And in a way they're right, because if you don't accept the peculiarly slugged consciousness of *Blow-Up,* you *are* rejecting something in them. Antonioni's new mixture of suspense with vagueness and confusion seems to have the kind of numbing fascination for them that they associate with art and intellectuality, and they are responding to it as *their* film—and hence as a masterpiece.

Two bad reviews by two irresponsible critics prove little; but when we search for alternatives, the point gets made. There are frequently fewer interesting plays or books in a given season than interesting films. Yet I think the *Blow-Up* controversy suggests how ill-equipped American criticism is to discuss them. With the exception of John Simon, there is, at the moment, no aesthetically sophisticated and informed guide available for the growing audience that seeks enlightenment about films—and Simon writes for only thirty-five thousand readers a dozen times a year in the *New Leader.* Of the journalistic film reviewers, there is scarcely one to be taken seriously. The mass magazines used to employ men like Agee or Macdonald, but such critics have been ill-replaced. Smaller film quarterlies (when they last long enough to be useful) are made up either by film buffs capable, like the *Cahiers du Cinéma* crowd, of ontological analyses of Jerry Lewis, or they bear the same relationship to live film criticism that a philological journal bears to the vital discussion of books.

Artists like Antonioni will continue to progress, unperturbed by widespread ignorance. (Moreover, they will prosper; *Variety* says *Blow-Up* is "k.o.") But scores of interested viewers will be left behind.

* Space limits prevent me from detailing Miss Kael's other vagaries, but I should like to draw attention to her one valid point. Miss Kael accuses Antonioni of secretly loving the mod life he exposes. This brings me to *Red Desert.*

Antonioni's first color film is in most respects identical to its predecessors, although it is less successful. More even than *La Notte,* it employs rather embarrassing dialogue. Also, whereas we can accept the representational function of normal people without needing to know much about them, a sick soul inevitably raises questions of causality which Antonioni is characteristically unable to answer.

More seriously, *Red Desert* is spoiled by a confusion in perspective, and it is here that Pauline Kael's point about *Blow-Up* is relevant. Much of the film seems to indicate that the camera is essentially inseparable from Giuliana's twisted viewpoint. That presumably explains why we see things change color or lose definition as she looks at them. But in addition to several scenes in which she does not appear, there are examples of contradictory focus: in one scene, objects are in soft focus before and behind her, while she is sharp. This technical confusion reveals a deeper thematic uncertainty. Much of the film suggests that Giuliana is sickened by an actually terrifying culture, full of slag heaps, loneliness and exploitation. But since Antonioni is at pains to show that industrial Ravenna is also beautiful (he even paints steam pipes in gay colors), we begin to suspect that Giuliana's inability to adjust is culpable. This would support the apparent optimism of the ending.

Blow-Up suggests, for some people, a similar ambivalence. Isn't Antonioni fascinated by the mod scene, which, although empty, is certainly colorful? So far as I can see, people who answer "yes" are confusing their own response to the undeniably exciting materials with the film's theme. (Could Antonioni have convinced us that a film was set in mod London if he had photographed London the way he photographed the Lipari Islands or Milan?) Nevertheless, I think this is an arguable and important question. Were it possible here, I should like to consider the nostalgia for answers that Antonioni shares with most great modern chroniclers of the wasteland.

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the way it is

Time Running, Running

WALTER TELLER

The inner shrine has just so much room for the material and the physical. If simple pleasures will not satisfy, what will? And if not simple, are they pleasures?

The imitation French but genuine Connecticut clock I inherited from Aunt Bertha having fallen silent, I take it to the Pennington Clock Shop. There the gray-faced clocksmith, looking it over, tells me his wife died last year. He himself, he adds slowly, has prostate trouble. My clock, he allows, is not in good shape. Squinting hard at it, he says the lever that intermittently locks the escapement and transmits impulses to the pendulum, namely, the verge, is shot. Ancient clock and ailing clocksmith vis-à-vis and vice versa. Spinning wheels. Human wheelworks. And time running, running.

October makes many places beautiful. October has been my favorite month, only now I see more clearly the signs of approaching winter in it. If in earlier years I saw the signs, it did not matter. But it matters now.

My wife and I, on a walk beside Cabin Run, find a large shrub—or call it a little tree—black haw, *Viburnum prunifolium,* leaves turning red, small prunelike fruits night-sky blue and ready for harvesting. Only where are the harvesters? Black haw —sounds like the name of a pirate (or would, if capitalized Black Haw), or a bird, or a mountain dweller.

Haw. When I was a boy my father worked in the vacation business. Every June our family migrated, lock, stock and barrel, east.

As a result, in North Belgrade, Maine, I sometimes sat beside Herbert Alexander on the driver's seat of his high-wheeled wagon, looking out over the backs and heads of the horses, and the dusty road far below. Bert was a dairyman and general farmer—middle-aged, red-faced, tall, lean and rangy —who also did hauling for the summer people. Hitching his team to a fading blue hayrack, he carted duffel bags and trunks, and cases of all manner of goods from the Maine Central Railroad station, always referred to as the depot.

Through straw-colored, drooping tobacco-stained mustaches, Bert Alexander called, "Haw, Prince! Haw, Lion," when urging the pair to turn left. Prince was a black Percheron stallion, Lion, a Percheron gelding, dappled gray. Big man, big horses. Heavy wheels, iron tires. I remember Bert's gruff coaxing, "Gee, Prince! Gee, Lion," and see the massive bodies, the muscled hindquarters, edging slowly to the right. "Gee, Prince! Gee, Lion," I repeated after Bert, trying for his deep stern steady intonation. All of forty-five years ago, and I still love to say those words.

Middle age is the time of life when you lie deeper in the bed you have made. I used to say, wait and see what they look like after they get through adolescence. Now I

✪ WALTER TELLER has written a number of books, among them, *The Farm Primer, Roots in the Earth* (with P. Alston Waring), *An Island Summer,* and three books on New England shipping captains.

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say, wait till you see what happens to them in middle age.

Strength comes from exposure. When giving a party, get the house blazing with light.

Things Not to Worry About: Disease, Aging, Death. Without death one would be locked in events and phenomena, unable to finish the course, or round out the cycle.

Envy, speed and hate shorten a man's life, my rabbi sermonized, quoting from rabbans of old. My rabbi went on to speak of death. Death lurks, he said. Why lurks? This is a widespread image—death skulking, lying in ambush, a skeleton with a scythe.

Why not death lovingly, patiently waiting? If one is going to embody the end of existence, why not Death's Bright Angel, taking one by the hand to the Isles of the Blessed in the Western Ocean? Every visualization of death derives from what men behold in life. No other vision is possible. Some men are bound out for Happy Hunting Grounds, some for Elysian Fields. Others head for their Long Home, or gratefully are Gathered to Their Fathers. Some simply vanish to leeward. Taken all in all, however, my rabbi is right. For most, in the present stage of mental conditioning, death continues to lurk.

Aging. Have you ever played tug-of-war? Ever been on the losing side? Some, when they feel themselves being hauled over the line, let go the rope. Others have to be dragged the distance. I aim to be one of the losers they have to pull all the way. Who does "they" refer to? What does this pronoun without an antecedent mean? "They" stands, I suppose, for The Powers That Be.

Disease. After forty it is patch, patch, patch all the way.

A misconception to try to tell all because in the first place one knows so little. And in the second, some things will not tell. Most birdwatching won't, nor most botanizing, coition, careering, or how one became a success.

November Afternoon in the Institute Woods. Gathered a mess of oyster mushrooms. Saw a daytime-flying owl, noted the irregular mothlike flight, the rounded head, the conspicuous absence of neck, and concluded it was a short-eared owl. Well, not exactly concluded. Birdwatching wants a margin for error. Could have been a barn owl. I think not, however. A bit too streaky, and perhaps not large enough. In any case, this was a nice thing to see and the silence it flew with, marvelous.

Another. It sounds funny but the more you know, the more you feel. The more you know, the more you hear. And the more you see. Had I known more while walking in the Institute Woods, I might have seen more. As matters stand I saw elm Pleurotus, several magnificent clusters growing on a dead elm, perhaps seven feet above the ground. Fresh clusters in splendid condition and architecturally beautiful, but I do not find them good eating and so passed them by.

In my younger years I found fungi repulsive to look at. I condemned them as parasitic. But everything lives on something. Why should I be offended by things that live on dead wood? When you walk in the woods in November, it is pleasant to find something growing. But then the season for growing never shuts down.

Verify growth and time. Note the changes throughout a day. Take its pulse and temperature every few hours. The day is dying but one may be living tomorrow, and in a new day reborn.

January 13. Thirty-six degrees at 10 a.m., barometer 30.2 and steady. Seen through cloud frosting, the sky appears pale. What I see of it looks old and shrunken.

Do I need to own more than fifty books? Could I cull to fifty and be satisfied? I think I could. I ought to go through my shelves and choose fifty. My choices now might surprise me—or maybe not. This would be a test of knowing what one likes. The same with music?

Make nothing of a few mistakes. Once you understand you have got it wrong,

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then you may start to get it right. Failure, it seems to me, is less common than the culture teaches. In his or her total experience a man or woman can hardly fail. Every man and woman partakes of the manifest universal and anonymous life. Or to speak of the matter in another way, no one who puts in time watching birds, or walking a beach and gathering beautiful stones, can at the last be found wanting, or frittering life away.

January 15. At 11:35 a.m. the mercury moves up to 40. Barometer 29.9 and rising. Skies clearing, a few veins of blue.

The mottled brown woodpecker known as the yellow-shafted flicker—flicker with golden wing linings—tap-tap-taps on the walnut tree. From my second-floor window I level with him. The red patch on his head proclaims male. A big smooth important-looking bird, radiating well-being, confidence, self-satisfaction. A morale builder. In another incarnation he might be a first vice-president.

January 27. Midafternoon. The mercury touches 40; the barometer stands at 29.6 inches and is falling. Wind from the northeast. Drizzling rain. Something springlike about the day. Midwinter is when one begins to feel the renewal.

Once you have seen a central New Jersey winter you have seen them all. The changes that come in the wake of the years are not in the winter but in the person. The real difference is not in the season but in the quality of the living.

It rains hard. White pines when wet look amazingly different from dry. It thunders. Colder weather coming.

January 28. Temperature 34 degrees at 11:20 a.m., barometer 29.6 and rising. A windy-voiced day.

Visited friends who just moved into a brand-new place on the fringe of town. Their house in a subdivided wood appears to be well equipped. In fact it seems to have everything—everything except truth, beauty and proportion.

You cannot beat the premise that it does not matter except with the premise that it does.

February 8. Early afternoon. The mercury stands at 22. We—all of us in this town—have come a long way since 7:30 this morning when the reading was 4. Sky is clear, blue as blue. And there is sun!

Yesterday's snowfall qualified as a blizzard. Ten to fourteen inches fell here, an all-day, fine fluffy wind-driven snow that piled against doors and in driveways. Never live in a house on a corner. Then you won't have so much sidewalk to clear.

As broken tire chains go by, slatting against rear fenders, they sound the same as they did years ago. They also remind me the sound is infrequently heard. No, the change is not in the winter but in the accompanying sound track.

Through snow-bleared streets I make my way to the Friendly Food Mart. At the checkout counter I greet the proprietor, Mr. Levine. "How are you feeling?" I ask. "I'm great," he replies. Then while tallying the score, bagging groceries and making change, he adds, "Of course it's not so easy as you get older. Things get more tough." I know what he means. "Yes," I say, "and what can you do?" He answers, "You reconcile." But does not say how.

February 10. At 9:35 a.m. the mercury stands at 30. The barometer gives the same reading. Two inches of snow fell during the night, leaving a pale fungus gray in the vault overhead and a shadowless light in the vale below.

Psychology, like charity, seldom begins at home. We bestow our insights on strangers. An uncharitable thought, if true. If spoken at home, it makes an example of its own point.

Lincoln's Birthday, sunny and sharp. At 9:50 a.m. the mercury stands at 15 degrees, barometer 30.35 and rising. Winter, I notice, brings its own bedding. Beyond the town, beside the river, snow blankets meadows. On the river itself it overlays sheets of thin ice. Swamp maple turns red; white mulberry, yellow. These rank-growing sorts are already hazy with color.

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At dusk a thin cresent rises in a clean sky. To its right, and below it, appears a blue-crystal star. Old familiar juxtaposition —how many times has one seen slender moon and bright star—and yet the design remains fresh as on the Fourth Day, its power to lift the heart undiminished. As I drive west into a fading light, stray patches of velvet black, eye-soothing clouds lie together along the horizon.

Later, about 11 o'clock, returning home through a cold clear night over county roads I sing "Rockaby Baby"— to me the greatest of automobile songs—sing it over and over.

Rockaby, baby
In the treetop
When the wind blows
The cradle will rock.
When the bough breaks
The cradle will fall,
And down will come baby,
Cradle and all.

Not what you are singing but how you are singing it. After a certain amount of time running, you are no longer singing a lullaby but rather a life-and-death story of man.

February 13. Daylight rises earlier, slopes upward faster. At 9:30 the morning is sunny through pale hazy sky.

Wintertime indoor swimming—I do not want it but my body insists. It seems to have a mind of its own—no, not a mind, but a life.

Mondays differ from other days. In the Y.M.C.A. pool, no instruction class precedes the adult swim period. Mondays the water is washed and refiltered and, of course, chlorinated. This morning the water felt cool and fresh.

A crowded pool used to bother me. It does not trouble me now. The chlorine seems to have bleached away irrelevant emotion.

How little we know about what attracts one person to another. There are social butterflies in the pool—among the regulars —but I am not one of them. I spend my half hour swimming, not standing around in waist-deep water talking. But then an older man with a bad back comes to the pool—I have seen him several times—a big open-faced man and, I should say, a country fellow. We exchange the time of day and I like him—like his style. Turns out he lives in a small nearby town, was editor, publisher and printer of the weekly there, and his father before him. Today he said in the windowless locker room, "Why don't you stop in and see us? I was talking with my wife and she said, why don't you invite your friend over?" Perhaps I am his friend —and he mine—although as yet we hardly know one another. Fellowship of the Chlorinated Pool.

February 15. Between sleeping and waking and, I guess, about dawn, I heard a crow caw, then a pair of doves wail. Wild music—and haunting. In my younger years it seemed to me that I was born at a late stage of civilization. Now, however, I know it is early, and that the thing—whatever it is—is only at the beginning.

The tragedy of do-it-yourself lies in lack of respect for ability, the notion that any slob can do anything: the comedy, in thinking you can do a professional job—and you cannot.

February 23. All outdoors this morning lies lathered in snow, a wet heavy late variety. Snow fills the interstices of the branches. Instead of daylight, one sees a translucence.

I liked the sight of snow on the branches but now that it has melted away, the branches look better. Snow dressed them up but could not improve them.

Time running. Hello, March. March arrives cold and convincing. Eighteen degrees at 9:35 a.m., barometer 30.1 and rising.

Growth accelerates. Red maples blossom. Red maple, sometimes called scarlet or swamp or soft maple, colors the low-lying landscape. And pussy, the glaucous willow, exhibits its catkins.

March 10, sunny and mild. Very early I heard the cardinal singing his cheerful

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mating call, singing and singing—without any pause and until I was out of breath.

Snowdrop, small hardy bulbous Galanthus, is blooming. And witch hazel, Hamamelis. Nice word to roll on the tongue—Ham-ah-*mee*-lis. Yellow petals and rich dark red calyx. The unopened leaf buds feel furry and soft, almost warm.

March 14. Wind west, a zephyry day. Sixty-two degrees at 2 p.m., barometer 29.9 and falling. Cloth-of-gold and yellow Dutch crocus—may their corms increase. They are blooming along these streets.

Tufted tits come to town. An exquisite pair of tufted titmice, rusty-flanked and median gray, drop in at the feeder. I had forgotten how small they are. Plenty of sparrows and grackles. And a couple of white-breasted nuthatches, very appealing small boat shapes, come bobbing.

Cardinals, male and female, appear. If I had to choose one bird it might be the female cardinal. It is not so much the colors she wears as the way she combines and carries them.

March 15. Thirty-eight degrees at 10 a.m., barometer 30.1 and steady. A pink-gray day. It is raining.

Lilac buds are suddenly chubby. Look at them, plump yellow in the rain. And drops of rain hang from twigs beside them.

With afternoon comes a change in the weather. A northeast wind blows. Temperature sinks to 30. Rain turns to hail. An early robin, hauling his neck in, sits in the bud-swelling crab apple tree, apparently dreaming of the worm. In wet stabbing cold, new growth is running—and time. Time never shuts down.

Halves

ANNE CAMERON

Saying it was not your season
you lay in my summer of dark dreams
like a seed in winter.
For all the working of soft thought
you never opened, but hoarded
all your lives and worlds
and robbed me, taking nothing.

Editors' Note: To reprint an article in which a misprint has appeared, through the fault of the editors, is impossible for obvious reasons, but it is possible in the case of a short poem. We printed in the Autumn issue this poem by Ann Cameron in which a word appeared that the poet had requested us to delete. We are, therefore, very happy to be able to print the poem correctly.

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REAPPRAISALS: I

H. G. Wells, America and "The Future"

ALFRED KAZIN

When H. G. Wells arrived here in April, 1906, to collect material for a book on the United States, he was not yet forty, and was famous in the English-speaking world for his scientific romances (*The Time Machine, The War of The Worlds*), for his predictions of the coming technology (*Anticipations*), and for his first novels of lower middle-class life (*Kipps*). Like many Englishmen born into poverty who have energetically made their way up in the world, Wells bore no resemblance to those Englishmen from the upper classes and the public schools who still dominated the world's—perhaps especially America's—image of the Englishman. Wells's mother had been a shopkeeper, and when the shop had failed, a housekeeper in a "great house"; his father, who had been a professional cricketer until he had broken his leg, had at one time been on the verge of immigrating to America. Wells himself was a hyperactive mind, extraordinarily quick, unstoppable in conversation as he was on paper, "a spoiled child," said his friend Bernard Shaw. Wells thought of himself as a wholly new development in English literature, a novelist with a scientific training. He had risen from a draper's shop to the company of Thomas Henry Huxley through his capacity for assimilating, teaching and popularizing biology. From the theory of evolution he had absorbed so powerful a sense of man's possibility and the incalculable future that he went on to create a new kind of science fiction, not simply a prediction of twentieth-century engineering, like Jules Verne's, but fantasies of a time when intelligence would dominate social life completely, become a dramatic character in its own right.

Wells, when still in his twenties, had found a large public for his voyages into the future; they were read as entertainments but also were taken as a new social gospel founded on the power of "science" to create a better world. Wells incarnated a belief in the scientists' "future," especially among self-educated people in England who felt that they were self-directing individuals, not a proletariat lashed by necessity. The "coming century" naturally awakened great expectations anyway; it would be an achievement to have lived in two centuries. The stirrings of the time, the anticipation on every hand that "Science" would create a more interesting world, possibly a better one, made Wells an important sign of the times. He was already one of those writers whose vision of things means more to people than any one of his books, who becomes a great popular educator and image maker. The image he particularly created was that of the "future," and in England especially there were many clerks, librarians, teachers, "seekers after knowledge," long dependent on their own efforts, who were dreamers of a future that H. G. Wells had first dreamed for them.

H. G. Wells understandably thought that he was an exceptional man. But what marked him as such was the quality of his interest in the future. As he said in the intellectual self-portrait that was his prologue

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to *The Future in America,* he was "curiously not interested in things, and curiously interested in the consequences of things"; he recognized his own stirrings in Heraclitus, the pre-Socratic philosopher who said that there was "no Being but Becoming."

> I have come to be [Wells admitted in the opening pages of *The Future in America*] even a little insensitive to fine immediate things through this anticipatory habit.
>
> This habit of mind confronts and perplexes my sense of things that simply *are,* with my brooding preoccupation with how they will shape presently, what they will lead to, what seed they will sow, and how they will wear. At times, I can assure the reader, this quality approaches other-worldliness, in its constant reference to an all-important hereafter. There are times, indeed, when it makes life seem so transparent and flimsy, seem so dissolving, so passing on to an equally transitory series of consequences, that the enhanced sense of instability becomes restlessness and distress; but on the other hand nothing that exists, nothing whatever, remains altogether vulgar or dull and dead or hopeless in its light. But the interest is shifted. The pomp and splendor of established order, the braying triumphs, ceremonies, consummations, one sees these glittering shows for what they are—through their threadbare grandeur shine the little significant things that will make the future. . .

Wells was perhaps never to grasp just how odd, creative, utterly personal and "otherworldly" this obsessive searching after the future was. He was a gifted writer in so many different fields, he came up with so many interesting ideas, saw so many patterns and consequences in the long sequence of human evolution, that, although he disclaimed any resemblance to Jules Verne, he could not help noticing that he had made certain correct predictions, and took credit for them. But this was a way of naming and regularizing his concern with the future, which was indeed so "otherworldly" that Wells was as possessed by it as a prophet by his religion, and which he was to turn against not like any other twentieth-century man who has lost his faith in illimitable progress, but like a believer who has lost his faith. Wells's "faith," even in this early stage of his career, was not *in* anything but his passion for reading the future, his excited, visionary sense of the endless flux that *he* kept always before his eyes and that *he* could read. His extraordinary conversation flowed into and made books; his books retained the sound and urgency of his conversation. Nothing so commonplace as predictions—in a time of many predictions—could have contained his interest in the future, could have expressed the quality of his interest in it. The future was in man's relentless, absorbed, constant determination of it. It was ultimately not so much ahead of man as a present intellectual passion for distinguishing between seeming and reality, for seizing on novelty and for unfolding patterns. Although Wells had created the "future" as a living, urgent topic for his readers, his greatest interest was in portraying history as constant movement. This was, of course, the movement of H. G. Wells's own mind. As the twentieth century wore on, grinding down his old self-confidence, Wells came to describe his life experience, as he did in *Experiment in Autobiography* (1934) as "discoveries and conclusions of a very ordinary brain." But when he arrived in New York in 1906, he was a notably self-confident writer who felt that he was up to understanding anything.

Wells came here not with the enthusiasm of the radical Englishman in the early nineteenth century, not with the skeptical and often malicious eye on the discomfort of American arrangements and the grossness of American manners that Mrs. Trollope and Dickens had brought to their travels, but with the "scientific" detachment of a Soviet engineer or a continental psychoanalyst today. The book Wells came to write was *The Future in America: A Search After Realities.* What, he was asking, can America show us of the necessary future, of the coming rational order? This was to be no book of mere impressions (although impressions naturally went to construct Wells's answers to his own questions). In the venerable, enormous, often comically extreme travel literature on the New World, Wells's book stands out because he always sees the contradiction be-

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tween the possibilities of American life and its actual irrationalities. The usual English inquiry was—and is—trained on our failure to live up to our democratic professions. Wells, in a breezy, cocky, faintly Olympian style that suits the complacent rationalism of pre-1914 social theory, finds a violation not of our professed idealism but of our constructive possibilities.

But this does not quite describe *The Future in America.* Wells was not lacking in imagination like the Webbs or in fraternal sympathy like Shaw. He was a feeling, committed, versatile social analyst, too restless intellectually to be wholly the novelist of the class he had left behind him and too imaginative to be merely a theoretician of society. *The Future in America* shows him disturbed by the hatred of Negroes, the hysteria that could be so quickly whipped up against "agitators" and revolutionaries, especially when they happened to be new arrivals in the country. But as one can tell from his anxiety about the excessive number of immigrants (just then arriving in their greatest numbers at Ellis Island), and the particular indignation he felt when Maxim Gorky was savagely excluded from every hotel in New York for innocently disregarding the official moral code, Wells's sympathies naturally went to the exceptional men, not to the masses. He was never much interested in the masses, for they were not, as in his autobiography he was to say the English gentry in their country houses were, "the experimental cellules of the coming Modern state."

Thus from the very beginning, Wells approached America with his characteristically excited, wholly speculative images of America as a field of energy and power, as an example of human motion and ambition on a new scale. On the great transatlantic liner bringing him over, the *Carmania,* he was bemused by the ship's size and speed, and he typically gives the reader a sense of the *Carmania* not merely steaming to New York but drifting between earth and sky in dreamlike space while it made itself an object of contemplation to the visionary eye of H. G. Wells: "The scale of size, the scale of power, the speed and dimensions of things about us alter remorselessly—to some limit we cannot at present descry." So, arriving in New York, he caught immediately the self-driving rush of the city's people, the constant adjuration to "step lively," and quickly tired by this insensate constant motion,

> I wandered, just at the right pitch of fatigue to get the full force of it, into the eastward region between Third and Fourth Avenue, came upon the Elevated Railway at its worst, the darkened streets of disordered paving below, trolley-car congested, the ugly clumsy lattice, sonorously busy overhead, a clatter of vans and draught horses, and great crowds of cheap base-looking people hurrying uncivilly by.

He soon made his way to the "white marble" clubs, the Union, the University, the Harvard, the Century; wandering down to lower Fifth Avenue past the Flatiron building, he caught again, in his unpredictably sensitive way, the power of the New York light, the extraordinary effect of sunset over the Hudson—

> Down the western streets one gets the sky hung in long cloud-barred strips, like Japanese paintings, celestial tranquil yellows and greens and pink luminosity toning down to the reeking blue brown edge of the distant New Jersey atmosphere, and the clear black hard activity of crowd and trolley-car and elevated railroad. Against this deepening color came the innumerable little lights of the house cliffs and the street tier above tier. New York is lavish of light, it is lavish of everything, it is full of the sense of spending from an inexhaustible supply. For a time one is drawn irresistibly into the universal belief in that inexhaustible supply.

At Ellis Island—then at the peak of its activity—Wells was shown around by the Commissioner of Immigration, and watched in fascination as the hopeful arrivals were admitted or rejected, separated (the reader of Wells's account cannot help thinking) into the saved or the damned as they finally reach the shores of the next world. Wells saw the whole tortuous immigration process through, he noticed everything, and much of the humanity he saw at Ellis Island he disliked—those immediately rejected were "a sinister crowd of miserable people,"

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"and here a second and a third such chamber each with its tragic and evil-looking crowd that hates us, and that even ventures to groan and hiss at us a little for our glimpse of its large dirty spectacle of hopeless failure . . ." He described how, "through an intricate series of metal pens," the long procession of immigrants was processed by examiners and medical officers; dazzled by the figures given him—one record day in 1906, twenty-one thousand immigrants came into the port of New York alone, and for that year the total would be a million two hundred thousand—Wells worked it out that the "daily procession" he was watching, with a yard of space to each person, stretched over three miles, that any week in the year would more than equal in numbers the daily procession of the unemployed in London.

"On they go, from this pen to that, pen by pen, towards a desk at a little metal wicket—the gate of America." Although Wells was awed by the statistics involved and responded as romantically as Frank Norris or Theodore Dreiser to the "symphony of growth" in America generally, the mass numbers being admitted to America worried him, and the Commissioner of Immigration, himself a British immigrant, tried to reassure Wells that the traditional "stock" would not suffer. Wells responded to the "common" man only when, as a victim, he touched Wells's highly developed sense of irony. On the Chicago-Washington express, while meditating on the great luxurious train as a symbol of human advancement, Wells was shocked out of this intellectual exercise when the train killed an Italian laborer working on the line. Wells described the train suddenly stopping in the middle of a bridge, a passenger and parlor-car attendant standing on the steps of the train and looking out.

> The former was on the bottom step of the car, the latter was supplying him with information.
>
> "His head's still in the water," he remarked.
>
> "Whose head?" said I.
>
> "A man we've killed," said he. "We caught him in the trestle-bridge."
>
> I descended a step, craned over my fellow-passenger, and saw a little group standing curiously about the derelict thing that had been a living man three minutes before. It was now a crumpled dark-stained blue blouse, a limply broken arm with hand askew, trousered legs that sprawled quaintly and ended in a pair of heavy boots, lying in the sunlit fresh grass by the water below the trestle-bridge. . . .
>
> A man on the line gave inadequate explanations. "He'd have been all right if he hadn't come over this side," he said.
>
> "Who was he?" said I.
>
> "One of those Eyetalians on the line," he said, and turned away. The train bristled now with a bunch of curiosity at every car end, and even windows were opened. . . .
>
> Presently it was intimated to us by a whistle and the hasty return of men to the cars that the incident had closed. We began to move forward again, crept up to speed. . . .

But even this incident meant that, for a time, the "big spectacle" all around him took on a quality of "magnificent infidelity."

The individual who most roused Wells's sympathies in America was Maxim Gorky, and there is no more intimate view of Gorky's extraordinary humiliation in America than Wells put into his book. Gorky had arrived in this country in April, 1906, as the great symbol of the struggle of the Russian people against czarism. His reception, said the New York *Times*, "rivalled the welcome given to Kossuth, Hungary's champion of freedom, and Garibaldi, the Father of United Italy. . . ." Gorky was besieged by reporters and the public, was dined by literary notables. Mark Twain and William Dean Howells arranged a special literary dinner in his honor. On April 14th, the New York *World* in a three-column spread on page one announced that the woman accompanying Gorky was not Mrs. Gorky, but the prominent Russian actress, Maria Andreievna. Two pictures were prominently displayed, one of Gorky and "that woman," the other of the original Mrs. Gorky with their child. Although it was explained that the Gorkys had long been separated, that Mrs. Gorky had remarried, and that the usual channels for legal divorce were closed to the unorthodox—Gorky's former wife even sent a telegram of explanation—Gorky and Mme. Andreievna were ejected from three hotels

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in one day, and found refuge only with some friends on Staten Island, where Wells talked with Gorky. Virtually all of the prominent Americans who had precipitately welcomed Gorky dropped him and some even denounced him; Howells and Mark Twain canceled their "literary dinner"; and Gorky, who had only recently been greeted as one of the great men of the time and the leading voice of Russian freedom, was described as an "assassin," "scoundrel" and "polluter of womanhood."

Wells, who had been in Gorky's company from the first, professed himself unable to understand the reversal of opinion against Gorky, and described it as one of his "two studies in disappointment"—the other was the savage sentence given to the young English anarchist, William MacQueen, who because of a speech made during the violent Paterson strike of 1902 was deliberately made an example of by the authorities. Wells was naturally sympathetic to the self-educated and idealistic young MacQueen; he was particularly sympathetic with the noble-looking and painfully honest Gorky; but in both cases he claimed to be puzzled even more than shocked by the moral hypocrisy directed against these two. Wells found it simply vestigial and unthinking; he did not think it necessary to analyze these archaic displays. It was enough for Wells to see that MacQueen and Gorky were radical individualists, conscious exceptions to American conformity. Wells spent his last evening in America with Gorky in the house on Staten Island where friends had taken him in.

After dinner we sat together in the deepening twilight upon a broad veranda that looks out upon one of the most beautiful views in the world, upon serene large spaces of land and sea, upon slopes of pleasant, window-lit, tree-set wooden houses, upon the glittering clusters of lights and the black and luminous shipping that comes and goes about the Narrows and the Upper Bay. . . . I gauged something of the real magnitude of this one man's disappointment, the immense expectation of his arrival, the impossible dream of his mission. He had come—the Russian peasant in person, out of a terrific confusion of bloodshed, squalor, injustice—to tell America, the land of light and achieved freedom, of all these evil things. She would receive him, help him, understand truly what he meant with his "Rossia." I could imagine how he had felt as he came in the big steamer to her, up that large converging display of space and teeming energy. There she glowed tonight across the water, a queen among cities, as if indeed she was the light of the world. Nothing, I think, can ever rob that splendid harbour approach of its invincible quality of promise. . . . And to him she had shown herself no more than the luminous hive of multitudes of base and busy, greedy and childish little men.

Wells had many sharp and sad things to say about the feeling against Negroes, about the passion for "getting and spending," about a messenger boy he saw in the subway still wearily doing his rounds at two in the morning. He did a sketch of "Hinkey-Dink" Kenna, a Chicago ward heeler, operating from a saloon. While on the subject of the "irresponsible American rich," he managed to get in a little crack at Henry James, in whose "later work. . . one sees them at their best, their refinement, their large wealthiness, their incredible unreality, I think of *The Ambassadors* and that mysterious source of the income of the Newsomes, a mystery that, with infinite artistic tact, was never explained; but more I think of *The Golden Bowl*, most spacious and serene of novels. . . But this is the quintessence, the sublimation, the idealisation of the rich American. Few have the restraint for this." He described Andrew Carnegie as "the jubilee plunger of beneficence, that rosy, greyhaired, nimble little figure, going to and fro between two continents, scattering library buildings as if he sowed wild oats. . . Nothing seems too wild to believe of him, and he fills the European imagination with an altogether erroneous conception of the self-dissipating quality in American wealth." He was quick to note every break in the official American facade, but despite his intellectual obsession with the "future," he was not always a good prophet. He thought that "the victory of private property was complete," and that in view of the opposition of the big cap-

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italists and the courts, it would take a revolution to bring about an income tax. (He also assumed, hilariously enough, that since Americans were determined to make the most of their lives, "one has a vision of bright electrical subways, replacing the filth-diffusing railways of today, of clean, clear pavements free altogether from the fly-prolific filth of horses coming almost, as it were, of their own accord beneath the feet of a population that no longer expectorates at all; of grimy stone and peeling paint giving way everywhere to white marble and spotless surfaces, and a shining order, of everything wider, taller, cleaner, better. . . .")

Wells thought that the average American had "no sense of the state," his material self-concern was paramount. So, to conclude his book, he ended by describing his interview with Theodore Roosevelt in the White House—the dreamer, planner, thinker who had such a powerful "sense of the state." The meeting of Wells and Roosevelt is described as a friendly, wholly philosophic dialogue between two intellectuals. The subject was Wells's *The Time Machine*. Although the book is not named, it is clear from the account of the discussion in the White House that this was the book they discussed, "a little book of mine, an early book full of the deliberate pessimism of youth, in which I drew a picture of a future of decadence, of a time when constructive effort had fought its fight and failed, when the inevitable segregations of an individualistic system had worked themselves out and all the hope and vigor of humanity had gone forever. The descendants of the workers had become etiolated, sinister, and subterranean monsters, the property-owners had degenerated into a hectic and feebly self-indulgent race, living fitfully amid the ruins of the present time."

Wells portrays T. R. energetically seeking to refute this view.

> He became gesticulatory, and his straining voice a note higher in denying this as a credible interpretation of destiny. With one of those sudden movements of his he knelt forward in a garden chair—we were standing, before our parting, beneath the colonnade—and addressed me very earnestly over the back, clutching it and then thrusting out his familiar gesture, a hand partly open and then closed.
>
> "Suppose after all," he said slowly, "that should prove to be right, and it all ends in your butterflies and morlocks. *That doesn't matter now.* The effort's real. It's worth going on with. It's worth it. It's worth it—even then."

Wells takes leave of America on this fadeout of T. R.—". . . the friendly peering snarl of his face. . . He sticks in my mind. . . as a very symbol of the creative will in man, in its limitations, its doubtful adequacy, its valiant persistence amidst perplexities and confusions. He kneels out, assertive against his setting. . ."

One of the most interested readers of *The Future in America* was Henry James, who wrote to Wells on November 8, 1906, with the kittenish exaggeration he practiced in his letters to muffle criticism—"I have done nothing today but thrill and squirm with it and vibrate to it almost feverishly and weep over it almost profusely. . . ." These prodigious formalities over, James came down to cases, for he had been back to his native land for a year's visit in 1904-5 (after an absence of nearly a quarter of a century), he was just then finishing up a volume of his impressions, *The American Scene* (published 1907), and his response to Wells's slighter, less informed but more direct book throws a significant light on James's crucial problem at this time: whether he could still, after so many years away, take on the new America in his fiction.

James wrote to Wells:

> The mere sight and sense and sound of your prodigious *reactions* before the spectacle of all actualities, combined with your power of making all those actualities—by a turn of the hand—consist of amazing, fermenting, immeasurable passionate 'questions' and social issues, comes near affecting me as the performance of a "strong man" or conjurer. . . . what primarily flies in my face in *these* things of yours is *you* and your so amazingly active and agile intellectual personality—I may even say your sub-line and heroic cheek. . . You tend always to simplify overmuch (that is as to large *particulars*). . . . But what am I talking about, when just this ability and impulse to simplify—so vividly—is just what I all yearningly envy you?

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—I who was accursedly born to touch nothing save to complicate it. . . I seemed to see, for myself, while I was there, absolutely *no* profit in scanning or attempting to sound the future —the present being so hugely fluid and the direction (beyond mere space and quantity and motion so incalculable—as to the *whole*); and yet here you come and throw yourself *all* on the future, and leave out almost altogether the American of my old knowledge; . . . . I think you, frankly,—or think the whole thing—too *loud* . . . . But . . . your book is, to my vision, extraordinarily full and rich and powerful and worthy, for all its fine fury of procedure—perhaps just by reason of the same—of the vast uncomfortable subject. . .

The American Scene was brought out in 1907 by the same publisher, Chapman and Hall, that had brought out *The Future in America* the year before. Wells's short letter of appreciation on how, in *The American Scene,* "The things are so completely done, the atmospheres return," summed up the incompatability of literary interest between them: "You take the thing at the opposite pole to my attack, you make it a criticism of life and manners—things I have had only incidental dealings with—you take the whole thing as an ineffectual civilisation." Obviously James and Wells were not meant to have any great sympathy for each other. The fascinating divergence of approach to America was to widen with each year as Wells became more and more exasperated with James's conception of the novel. The strained friendship came to an end when Wells published a parody of James in *Boon,* 1915. In answer, James wrote a famous and truly magnificent letter on the theme that "it is art that *makes* life, makes interest, makes importance, for our consideration and application of these things, and I know of no substitute whatever for the force and beauty of its process."

Yet the contrast between James and Wells on the subject of America remains extraordinarily revealing of both. *The American Scene* is the book of a "native," and Wells's frankly the impressions of a visitor; *The American Scene* is the soliloquy of a novelist, prodigiously expressive, with a staggering visual imagination and unlimited intellectual fancy, who seems to be setting the "scene" with ideas for dozens of novels he *could* write. James's book is the response of a very great literary sensibility to the established surface, to the cherished, historic, appointed value, to whatever *is.* Where Wells is the eager, restless historic impressionist of things-as-they-can-be, as presumably they are about to be, as they could be and should be, James is concerned with the look of buildings, streets, statues, parks. There are virtually no living people in *The American Scene;* instead there is the power to lift all American artifacts to the honor and pride and fitness of an aesthetic subject. The book is really one long meditation on whether America would still "do" as a subject for James's kind of fiction—whether America is up to James, and of course whether *he* is up to the powerhouse and the mannerlessness that it has become. The mad eloquence of the book rings with the passion of this unexpressed question, of his anxiety in returning to America: can he still, at his age, and after his long absence, "handle" this scene? James founded his kind of novel on the interest of "manners," and manners, even in the more obvious sense, were just what he could no longer accept in America. The country had somehow rushed away from him. *The American Scene* showed what he could still make of it. It is an overpowering mosaic of impressions, slightly forced, a book of wonderful sentences which stops at each sentence and starts up again, carrying the reader along, because the author is so undefeatable, so prodigious of impressions, so avid, so imperial in his authority. It is exasperating because it leaves out so much of American humanity and extraordinary because it makes such a powerful impression anyway. Only an American could have written so wholly personal a book about his country.

Yet Wells's almost mystical invocation of the future was, in the end, to prove as "personal" as was James's sense of the past. Wells returned to the United States in 1935 for a look at the New Deal, and his image of Franklin D. Roosevelt—". . . a ganglion for reception, expression, transmission, combination and realisation, which, I take

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it, is exactly what a modern government ought to be"—was, like his portrait of Theodore Roosevelt in *The Future in America,* not so much an exact description as a certificate of approval. The organized ideology in Russia had taken the power to create the future away from nineteenth-century literary imaginations like himself. Wells would not yet admit this. He saw in Stalin the intellectual statesman that he had seen in other heads of state who would talk his ideas with him. Like Shaw and the Webbs, Wells had waited so long for the "rational" and "modern" state that by the thirties he became impatient and saw it everywhere.

But just before the end he wavered. When he was near eighty, he took a doctorate in science at London University with a thesis on "personality." By the end of the Second World War, when he felt himself dying, he discovered, in his last book, "mind at the end of its tether." In the face of the atom bomb, reality was not rational and the rational was not the real. ". . . A frightful queerness has come into life. Even quite unobservant people now are betraying, by fits and starts, a certain wonder, a shrinking and fugitive sense that something is happening so that life will never be *quite* the same again . . ." The habitual interest in his life is critical anticipation. Of everything he asks, To what will this lead? And it was natural for him to assume that there was a limit set to change, that new things and events would appear, but that they would appear consistently, preserving the natural sequence of life. He did his utmost to preserve the trends, that upward spiral, toward their convergence in a new phase in the story of life, and the more he weighed the realities before him the less was he able to detect any convergence whatever.

". . . . We pass into the harsh glare of hitherto incredible novelty. It beats the searching imagination. The more it strives the less it grasps. The more strenuous the analysis, the more inescapable the sense of mental defeat. The cinema sheet stares us in the face. That sheet is the actual fabric of Being."

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REAPPRAISALS: II

Samuel Taylor Coleridge: Prisoner and Prophet of System

JOSEPH WHITEHILL

For more than a hundred years, Coleridge has been the darling of the specialists. Probably oftener than any literary man since Shakespeare, he has served with yeoman usefulness whenever called up to buttress causes or provide strong, apt quotations in support of scholars' theses, no matter how opposed the causes or incompatible the theses. Philosophers cite his philosophy, theologians sermonize from his religious writing, poets study his verse, and the New Critics use him for a road map. I am thus in a common company of sinners if I, a literary fellow with training in electronics and communication, seek some small use of the man in my own area of interest.

Of all Coleridge's biographers and critics, none save Sir Herbert Read, in *Lectures in Criticism,* has made a really persuasive effort to explain his serial adoption of first poetry, then philosophy, then metaphysics, then theology, to achieve his aims. Sir Herbert subsumes all Coleridge's literary activity under religion, and demonstrates well enough that in all his verbal life (which was almost all the life he had) he never strayed far from the shelter of Christianity. Sir Herbert suggests that Coleridge's efforts, however disguised, were all ministry—ministry to himself and others.

This seems true enough. My errand here, however, is to suggest that there is a still larger class of general activity under which virtually all Coleridge's meaningful movements can be taken: the struggle for perfect communication. Allowing this, perhaps modern communication theory if used unrigorously, by scent, sense and scintilla, can enlighten our view of Coleridge's squandered life, and can suggest some answers to the very problems that baffled him. Furthermore, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, the man we are attempting to study through the lens of communication theory, may himself unwittingly have been one of the theory's ancestors.

In 1948, Claude E. Shannon, research mathematician for the Bell Telephone Laboratories, published a paper called *A Mathematical Theory of Communication,* and became therein the name father of the new discipline. In the same year Norbert Wiener published *Cybernetics,* dealing more with the control of control than with the meaning of message itself. Both works arose to some extent from the authors' wartime preoccupations, the one with message secrecy and the other with fire control. In the years since then, com-

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munication theory has gathered to its use material and mathematics from such seemingly disparate fields as linguistics, statistics, general semantics, cryptography and thermodynamics.

In broadest terms, communication theorists seek to discover the laws that govern the transmission of the most information with fewest errors in the shortest time along the narrowest conduit between the source and the recipient. In the following lines from Claude Shannon's own article on information theory, in the 1958 edition of *The Encyclopaedia Britannica* (wherein, with much modesty, he mentions himself only in the bibliography), it is good and fruitful for readers who are also writers to read tendentiously, with bias, keeping always aware of the special needs of their profession, and ready to snare a possibly useful idea, however disguised, as it flies past.

> The significant aspect of information from the transmission standpoint is the fact that one particular message is chosen from a set of possible messages. What must be transmitted is a specification of the particular message which was chosen by the information source. The original message can be reconstructed at the receiving point only if such an unambiguous specification is transmitted. Thus information is correlated with the notion of a choice from a set of possibilities. Furthermore, these choices occur with certain probabilities; some messages are more frequent than others.
>
> . . . there are three essentially different ways in which bandwidth can be reduced in a system such as television or speech transmission. The first is the straightforward exchange of bandwidth for signal-to-noise ratio. . . . The second method is utilization of the statistical correlations existing in the message. This capitalizes on particular properties of the information source to the channel. Finally, particular properties of the ultimate destination of the message can be used . . . In general, the exploitation of particular "sensitivities" or "blindness" in the destination requires a proper matching of the channel to the destination.
>
> A study has been made of the distribution of lengths and frequency of occurrence of the different words in a language such as English. It has been found, for example, that the relative frequency of the n^{th} most frequent word may be expressed quite closely by a formula of the type $P(n + m)^{-b}$, with suitable constants for P, m, and b. Experimental data of this type can be explained as consequences of the assumption that a language gradually evolves under continued use into an efficient communication code.
>
> These results suggest that the human being may tend to adopt something like the ideal encoding occurring in communication theory.

I hazard that these results further suggest, using simple one-to-one analogues between the equipment and processes of communication theory, and the literary devices and means of language, that good prose is more efficient communication than bad prose, that poetry is more efficient than either, and that communication theory offers a way not only to tell the good from the bad, but also to tell *why*. For the moment, however, let us put these oddly-joined and ill-mated thoughts to the back of the stove to simmer, and turn to Coleridge himself.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge was his father's fourteenth and last child, and his mother's tenth and last. From the limited information available about his earliest years, we know that he was rather pampered by his parents, protected by them both from the jealous behavior (although not the jealousy itself) of his siblings, and from normal boy-boy contact with the students of his father's school. We know from contemporary reports that he early exhibited the prodigious verbal aptitude he displayed all his life. A servant, Molly, persecuted the young Samuel in small cruel ways because he had displaced his next older brother, Francis (to whom she seems to have been unhealthily attached), as the family baby. Many of the classical ingredients favoring the development of anxiety neurosis thus seem to have been present early: in his surroundings, doting parents, sibling jealousy and a disgruntled adult; in himself, high intelligence and erethistic sensitivity.

So I became a *dreamer* [he wrote] and acquired an indisposition to all bodily activity;

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and I was fretful, and inordinately passionate, and as I could not play at anything, and was slothful, I was despised and hated by the boys; and because I could read and spell and had, I may truly say, a memory and understanding forced into almost an unnatural ripeness, I was flattered and wondered at by all the old women. And so I became very vain, and despised most of the boys that were at all near my own age, and before I was eight years old I was a *character*. Sensibility, imagination, vanity, sloth, and feelings of deep and bitter contempt for all who traversed the orbit of my understanding, were even then prominent and manifest.

In the eerie way that traumatic events often seem to have of waiting to happen until the victim is most vulnerable, a distilled and condensed tragedy took place in the household in Coleridge's eighth year, a tragedy involving virtually all the affective objects of his world. The boy Coleridge had asked his mother to give him his cheese in a single slice, so he might toast it. She complied, then left the room. Francis, resenting the favoritism, stole the cheese and crumbled it. Coleridge flew at his brother in high rage, and Francis, for fun, pretended to be dead on the floor. Coleridge, credulous and scared, was searching the other for some sign of life, when Francis galvanized and hit him hard in the face. In redoubled rage, Coleridge seized a knife and attacked his brother with it, at which moment his mother returned. He fled the house and climbed a nearby hill alone and passed the night in hiding. First the household, then the entire town of Ottery, went into an uproar of search that lasted until morning, when a passerby discovered the boy and carried him home in his arms. Coleridge recalls that his dear father wept, and his mother was overcome with joy, at his return. He was put in bed ill of the fever that is now suspected of being the beginning of the rheumatic heart trouble that deviled him the rest of his life. All encapsulated in the one horrifying event were father, mother, jealous brother, food, and the shock of discovery of the feral violence that lay sleeping within him. It is no surprise that Coleridge returns to the episode more than once in later writings.

Then, in less than a year, Coleridge's father died. It is difficult to exaggerate the extent of the boy's loss; in the wink of an eye he had changed position from that of honored, if beleagured, son secure in the house to that of a boarding-school boy, half-orphaned, in London. How much did Coleridge blame himself for his father's death? No matter what other explanation his mother may have offered, could he have avoided drawing a causal connection between his father's death and his own deportation?

For the rest of his life, Coleridge trudged the world looking for his father. Southey, Poole, Wordsworth, the Wedgwoods, Morgan, Cottle, Gillman: this line of men stretched from Coleridge's youth to his failing old age, supporting him in all the ways a father supports his child in its nonage, with shelter, money, advice, solicitude, admonishment and love. None was able, however, to bestow on him a father's perfect final gift: independence. Coleridge passed his life a prodigious monster, a nimble boy imprisoned in the shape of a man.

I have a wise friend who said, "I sometimes think that writers are people who weren't listened to enough when they were small." Coleridge, in his soul, remained always small.

One of man's most consistent and characteristic employments is pushing back the jungle. The proportion of his energy a man so spends and the reality of the jungle are measures of the severity of his neurosis. The mythical "ideally adjusted man" has cleared a small purlieu in which he feels utterly safe; although the purlieu is small, it is large enough. And, being large enough, it is, *to him,* large. He sleeps serene in the knowledge that the margins of his clearing will not shrink in on him in the night. Little of his total energy supply is spent tending his boundary; much remains to him to use as he sees fit in pursuit of the good life. He

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produces little art but amusement and little philosophy beyond approval of regular meals. He is incurious and quite happy.

In one measure or another, each of us is removed from this "ideally adjusted man" along a scale of increasing energy expenditure required for sheer psychic survival. At the end of this scale cowers the helpless, sick man who stares at a single point while battle rages behind his eyes. Prisoner of pointless habits, racked with the real pain of imaginary disease, seeing, when seeing at all, with tunnel vision, he can neither offer nor receive.

Fixed somewhere along that scale toward its nether end, yet bountifully endowed with both intelligence and energy, Coleridge lived out his life of golden befuddlement and jerky wandering.

So far as we know, of all man's tools for the clearing of his jungle the one of single preeminence is language, for only through language do we love, and only through love do we live. The management of language is communication; the study of the management of language is an effort to devise a communication theory. All his life Coleridge did nothing else. Poetry, philosophy, pantisocracy, metaphysics, theology and criticism—all were different roads of the same search. And, in the intervals, there was always the conversation, a broad and powerful stream that was never ended, only interrupted, until he died. A man all of words, his only tools, he tried them in every permutation his desperate imagination could invent, to find safety and peace. Since panic develops outsight, not insight, he never knew how often and how closely he grazed his goal. Never resting, never content but briefly, he passed his life picking things up, studying them until he or they were exhausted, dropping them in frustration and disgust, and casting around for the next.

It is almost certain that he was early aware of a crippling indecisiveness. He frequently offered with one hand and took away with the other, as if anticipating a painful rebuff from an unseen source. Or, many postures are struck in the dire hope that one, at least, will be right. A quintessential example of this is the early poem, *The Eolian Harp.* It begins with a hymn to his wife, the very ordinary Sara, and their quiet, rustic life together in Somersetshire. Very soon, however, at line 6, Sara slips from his mind and he sallies away into his fantasies alone, beginning a philosophic search of Nature for Intent. By line 26, beautifully, his vision has opened from a mere lute played by the wind to see the wind of Soul blowing through all life. With a guilty start at line 34, however, he remembers Sara is still there and nods to her: "And thus, my Love! as on the midway slope. . . ." I have never seen a more dutiful and perfunctory exclamation point.

Now he goes on again without Sara, arriving by line 43 at an inspired extrapolation from lute to poet's mind to all of Being:

> And what if all of animated nature
> Be but organic Harps diversely fram'd,
> That tremble into thought, as o'er them sweeps
> Plastic and vast, one intellectual breeze,
> At once the Soul of each, and God of all?

Many very good poets would have been content to end here, having said a hard thought succinctly and beautifully, but the bedeviled Coleridge, guilty at having thought a new thought without permission, so to speak, and without having consulted Sara first, is at once seized by doubt, and adds an exculpatory ending that refers all the earlier matter of the poem to Sara's cold eye:

> Meek Daughter in the family of Christ!
> Well hast thou said and holily disprais'd
> These shapings of the unregenerate mind;
> Bubbles that glitter as they rise and break
> On vain Philosophy's aye-babbling spring.

It is a hardhearted reader, indeed, who will not pity the poet now. Insight failing, he did not see how shabby and hollow a compliment he had paid Sara; if he had, he might have either burned the poem or left the woman. Instead, he kept

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both song and recantation, and took eleven years to leave his wife.

Probably all artists suffer to some degree from the inability to know the worth of what they have done, but Coleridge (more than most) seems, in his vacuum of self-criticism, to have been easily demoralized by any enthusiasm for his work that sounded lukewarm or qualified. I believe that this demoralization accounts for almost every abrupt change in his creative direction, and especially for his lunatic trip to Germany that ended the *annus mirabilis,* 1797-1798. The year that had begun so auspiciously with the grant of the Wedgwood annuity, which proposed to free Coleridge forever from the need to earn a living—the news arrived in the nick of time, just as he was about to take a salaried post as a Unitarian minister in Shrewsbury—was the year of *The Ancient Mariner, Kubla Khan,* and most of *Christabel,* three poems that will last as long as the English language. Yet he could not assess his own accomplishments. He concluded that, because the heavens did not peal or the waters part, he had failed again. He began looking around. Perhaps he needed more study. Perhaps he needed a new language. Perhaps he should now learn all he could of the physical sciences, or of the elegantly skeletal German criticism. Perhaps, in other words, he needed to do anything at all but what he was doing now.

He and Wordsworth bundled together current handy poems—among them such by-blows as *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner,* and *Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey*—and levered Joseph Cottle into advancing enough money against the royalities of the volume, *Lyrical Ballads,* to pay for their passage to Germany. No money from the promised Wedgwood annuity had yet been paid Coleridge; the Wedgwood brothers had presumed that a year or so of delay, while they funded the annuity with capital to maintain it, would make no signal difference to Coleridge. Rarely has philanthropy gone so wide of its purpose. A good guess is that Coleridge had, in fact or fantasy, spent the money years in advance.

The peace of soul awarded Coleridge by the news of the Wedgwood annuity had lasted only until he recognized, with the free-floating sight of the anxiety neurotic, that just because it looked like peace was no reason to assume it really was. His sure, wrong judgment of the year just past was that it was a trifling preliminary to the greater work coming. He had a wonderful ability of never knowing a good thing while it was in his hands.

Let us now look with a selective eye at some of the good things Coleridge had in his hands and let slip. We must, as we read his own words, affect for the moment the intellectual posture of the communications theorist; we must sieve everything through the conceptual nets of Information, Message, Meaning, Noise, Entropy, Compression and Efficiency, and we must not be shocked at the strange fish the nets bring up.

From *Anima Poetae:*

There are two sorts of talkative fellows whom it would be injurious to confound, and I, S. T. Coleridge, am the latter. The first sort is of those who use five hundred words more than needs to express an idea—that is not my case. Few men, I will be bold to say, put more meaning into their words than I, or choose them more deliberately and discriminately. The second sort is of those who use five hundred more ideas, images, reasons, etc., than there is any need of to arrive at their object, till the only object arrived at is that the mind's eye of the bystander is dazzled with colors succeeding so rapidly as to leave one vague impression that there has been a great blaze of colors all about something. Now this is my case, and a grievous fault it is. My illustrations swallow up my thesis.

From *Biographia Literaria, XIV:*

The poet, described in *ideal* perfection, brings the whole soul of man into activity, with the subordination of its faculties to each other, according to their relative worth and dignity. He diffuses a tone and spirit of unity, that blends, and (as it were) *fuses,* each into each, by that synthetic and magical power, to which

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we have exclusively appropriated the name of imagination. This power, first put in action by the will and understanding, and retained under their irremissive, though gentle and unnoticed, controul (*laxis effertur habenis*) reveals itself in the balance or reconciliation of opposite or discordent qualities: of sameness, with difference; of the general, with the concrete; of the idea, with the image; the individual, with the representative; the sense of novelty and freshness, with old and familiar objects; a more than usual state of emotion, with more than usual order; judgement ever awake and steady self-possession, with enthusiasm and feeling profound or vehement; and while it blends and harmonizes the natural and the artificial, still subordinates art to nature; the manner to the matter; and our admiration of the poet to our sympathy with the poetry.

From *Biographia Literaria, XVII:*

. . . the rustic, from the more imperfect development of his faculties, and from the lower state of their cultivation, aims almost solely to convey *insulated facts,* either those of his scanty experience or his traditional belief; while the educated man chiefly seeks to discover and express those *connections* of things, or those relative *bearings* of fact to fact, from which some more or less general law is deducible. For *facts* are valuable to a wise man, chiefly as they lead to the discovery of the indwelling *law,* which is the true being of things, the sole solution of their modes of existence, and in the knowledge of which consists our dignity and our power.

[I can little agree] with the assertion, that from the objects with which the rustic hourly communicates the best part of language is formed. For first, if to communicate with an object implies such an acquaintance with it, as renders it capable of being discriminately reflected on; the distinct knowledge of an uneducated rustic would furnish a very scanty vocabulary. The few things, and modes of action, requisite for his bodily conveniences, would alone be individualized; while all the rest of nature would be expressed by a small number of confused general terms. Secondly, I deny that the words and combinations of words derived from the objects, with which the rustic is familiar, whether with distinct or confused knowledge, can be justly said to form the *best* part of language. It is more than probable, that many classes of the brute creation possess discriminating sounds, by which they can convey to each other notices of such objects as concern their food, shelter, or safety. Yet we hesitate to call the aggregate of such sounds a language, otherwise than metaphorically. The best part of human language, properly so called, is derived from reflection on the acts of the mind itself. It is formed by a voluntary appropriation of fixed symbols to internal acts, to processes and results of imagination, the greater part of which have no place in the consciousness of the uneducated man; though in civilized society, by imitation and passive remembrance of what they hear from their religious instructors and other superiors, the most uneducated share in the harvest which they neither sowed nor reaped.

It is indeed very possible to adopt in a poem the unmeaning repetitions, habitual phrases, and other blank counters, which an unfurnished or confused understanding interposes at short intervals, in order to keep hold of his subject, which is still slipping from him, and to give him time for recollection; or in mere aid of vacancy, as in the scanty companies of a country stage the same player pops backwards and forwards, in order to prevent the appearance of empty spaces, in the procession of Macbeth, or Henry VIIIth. But what assistance to the poet, or ornament to the poem, these can supply, I am at a loss to conjecture.

We would be very dull readers if we did not sense in these lines the groping of an artist toward a science of communication. Now, by eerie contrast, let us watch the groping of a scientist of communication toward a theory of art—John R. Pierce, in *Electrons, Waves, and Messages:*

[The author has just created several nonsense passages using second and third order approximations (digram and trigram structure as in English) in which the frequencies of two- and three-letter groups are as in English, but the sequences are random: ON IE ANTSOUTINYS ARE T INCTORE ST BE S DEAMY ACHIN D ILONASIVE TUCOOWE AT TEASONARE FUSO TIZIN ANDY TOBE SEACE CTISBE, and, IS NO LAT WHEY CRATICT FROURE BIRS GROCID PONDENOME OR DEMONSTRURES OF THE REPTAGIN IS REGROACTIONA OF CRE.]

For me, at least, many of the words have great charm. I find DEAMY pleasant (from dream?), PONDENOME strikes me as solemn, INCTORE as somewhat less so. ILONASIVE

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has a dubious connotation. I should hate to be called ILONASIVE in these troubled days. TIZIN sounds foreign. I would not like to be characterized as GROCID (because of gross, groceries, and gravid?).

Let the reader amuse himself by conscientiously trying out his reactions; I believe that he will have some. Yet they are all his. Nothing was intended by the words. They are the product of chance working through a rather narrow channel, of chance circumscribed by the statistics of English text. There is no feeling of an author to be conveyed. That which is found is like the pattern of sound in dripping water, the face on the rock, the scene portrayed by stains on the wall; all is in the mind of the beholder. Such chance products as these words give an unalloyed opportunity for creative appreciation. The enjoyment comes from within. It is the enjoyer's own, and this, I should think, would make it all the more valuable to him.

It would seem odd if mathematics had nothing to contribute to the arts. The idea is so obvious that many have tried to evoke art from mathematics. An eminent mathematician, Birkhoff, wrote a book on esthetic measure. To me, personally, the work seems doubtfully founded in that it looks at pieces of porcelain and scraps of paper rather than at the human beings who appreciate them. As far as creation goes we need not argue about the methods proposed. The author gives an example to illustrate the application of the rules derived in writing a poem. We see at once that a second-rate poet is as an artist far ahead of a very eminent mathematician. A later author, Joseph Schillinger, claims a share of the merit of *Porgy and Bess* for his mathematical system of composition. A skeptic might argue that a composer of genius can make a good thing of anything. Certainly when mathematics is used as a sort of guide or crutch, it is hard to apportion credit between mathematics and its user.

I think that in the past those who tried to use mathematics in artistic creation have expected too much. They strove for *Paradise Lost* rather than good nonsense jingles. Moreover, I think that they tried to use mathematics for just exactly the wrong purpose. They tried to use mathematics to put order into art rather than to take it out.

While order is necessary to art, mediocre art is troubled by too much order. The bad poet repeatedly rhymes love with dove. We know the next word, the next cliché, before we encounter it. The same thing holds true for bad music and bad painting. There is no surprise, nothing fresh. The artist is chained and directed by stale habits. More order could not help him, but a little unpredictability might.

My experience has, however, raised an issue beyond that of the stochastic generation of art. Apparently, if I try I am capable of liking almost anything that is surprising if only it has some order or recognizable feature. Too, I am not entirely alone in this. I wonder, how much of the appreciation of some of the more drastic of "modern" writing, music, and painting is a combination of a knowledge of the artist's style and tricks and a determined effort to enjoy? How can one tell?

Part of our errand here is to try.

Henceforth in this paper the track is all uphill, and the train will be moving slowly enough to let the reader step off anywhere without injury if he disputes the direction it is taking. I would ask only that dispute take the form not of reflexive, out-of-hand rejection but of counter-offer.

One test of the plausibility of borrowing from one discipline to enlighten another is to investigate the extent to which the small terms—the building blocks—of the one may, without forcing, be taken as analogues to similar terms of the other. For example, the language and dimensions and relations of perfect-fluid hydraulics were early found analogous to paritive terms in electricity; thousands of students who had first learned their hydraulics well found the learning of the principles of electricity easier therefore. The usefulness of that analogy is not diminished because it breaks down when higher-frequency alternating currents are studied: it has already served its purpose. Let us therefore apply the test of small terms to the two disciplines of information theory and poetry.

The simplest communication system comprises a source and a receiver separated from each other by a transmission means. If we agree at the outset that we shall consider only those communication systems that have purpose, and that the purpose is the conveyance of mean-

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ingful information from the source to the receiver, we shall escape the logical traps that catch us when we examine hypothetical systems designed to convey nonmeaningful information, or Gaussian nonsense; to do so, however, we must add another component to the system: a source of noise. (Noise, in this highly restricted sense, is nonmeaningful information or any unpredictable influence that erodes the meaning of the chosen message. If the message sent is truly meaningless from the beginning there is no possible way for the receiver to discriminate between meaningless message and equally meaningless noise; the receiver can never be sure it has reconstructed the exact message sent.)

The source, in this simplest communication system, has two parts: a storage reservoir and an encoder. The storage reservoir is the repository of the chosen number of possible messages that might be sent. It could be a filing cabinet, a recording tape, a ruminating man with a telephone in his hand, a three-dimensional lattice of ferrite tori, or one lovely sunset. The function of the encoder is to accept the one chosen message from the finite number of possible messages in this storage reservoir, and transform it into a patterned sequence of symbols susceptible of being sent along the given transmission means. The encoder might be a microphone, a telegrapher with his key under his hand, a television iconoscope or Anna Pavlova.

The transmission means is just that—the conduit between the source and the receiver. It could be, depending on the rest of the system, the ether, a wave guide, a telephone line, or the string between Jack's tin can and Jill's.

Like the source, the receiver in this simplest communication system has two parts: a decoder and a storage reservoir. The decoder accepts the received message sequence and reconstructs it according to its own immanent rules into intelligence approximating that which had been encoded at the other end. (We shall shortly see the need for that word "approximating.") A radio, a telephone earpiece and a rheumatic knee all are decoders. The receiver storage reservoir is of the same class and kind as would be found in the source of a system compatible with it.

At work in our simplest communication system is the Aristotelian devil, entropy. Neither intelligent nor malicious, yet often seeming both, entropy has as many special definitions as there are disciplines that have adopted it. In physics and thermodynamics, entropy is a measure of disorder. The universe is running down, toward a state in which nothing moves or changes and there is never any news. Life, in thermodynamic terms, is a brief attack on the stillness and sameness of eternity. Small wonder that the word carries so much emotional baggage.

In communication theory, entropy is a measure of uncertainty. Pierce writes,

> Communication theory deals with the unexpected, the unpredictable. The channel capacity needed to transmit a message in a given time depends on how uncertain the message destination is as to what the message may be, on how unpredictable the message is. The unpredictability depends on the source of the message, on how unpredictable the message source is, on how much freedom or choice it exhibits in producing messages.

Now contrast two familiar communication systems of widely different entropies. Your high-fidelity phonograph is able to please you equally with its imitation of the last movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony or the first movement of Shostakovich's Fifth; your phonograph is prepared for the unpredictable. In the telegraph office at the railroad station, by contrast, all you will hear is, "click-clack," whatever the message. The phonograph is a system of high entropy, and the telegraph is one of low entropy. Yet a system of high entropy—the phonograph—will give equal significance to the buzzing of a fly and the soprano's last trill, while the system of low entropy—the telegraph—will persist in delivering accurate messages, if simple, no matter the loud conversation in the room with the sending operator, no matter the roar of the train

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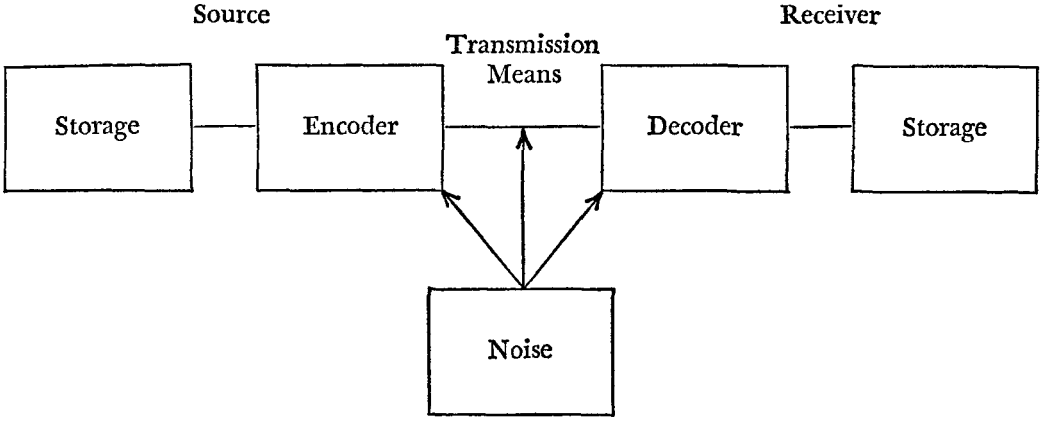
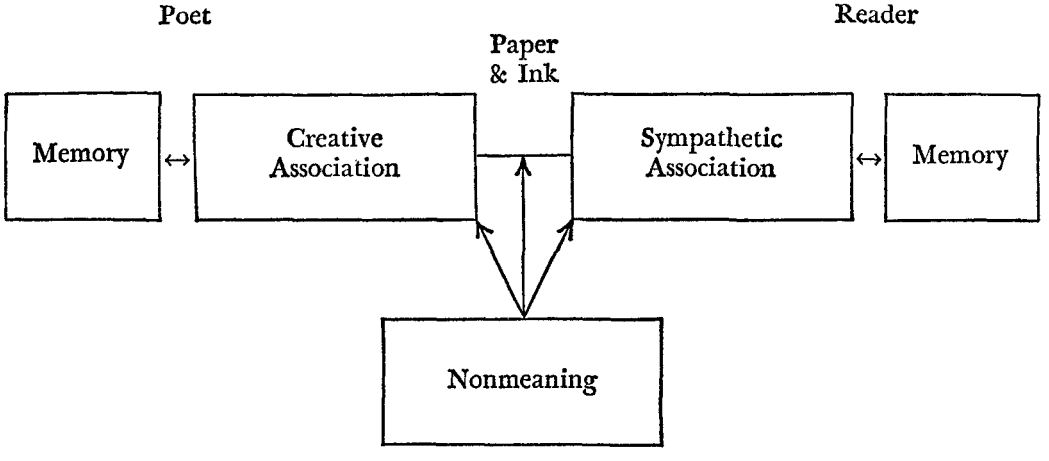
below the wires, no matter even a grand thunderstorm between the stations. Refining this gross difference between a high-fidelity phonograph and a railroad telegraph, it is quite reasonable to conceive of a telephone system that would convey messages only in, say, Japanese, to compare with present systems that pass all languages equally well. The system sensitized only to Japanese will be less subject to affliction by random signals—noise—than the other, and will, under whatever troublous external irritation, always transmit Japanese better than an untuned (uncoded) system in its place. So much, say we all with relief, for entropy. The only reason for introducing it at all was to add the last box—noise—to the diagram above.



Noise, in communication theory, is commonly taken to mean spurious signals without meaning, which the system cannot distinguish from message; that is, noise is *added* to message, and dilutes or confuses it with more or less grave effect on ultimate intelligibility. Although noise is commonly understood to be only additive, I see no philosophical or mathematical objection to the inclusion under the name "noise" of subtractive effects such as random spurious filtration or absorption of signal, fade, and *any other unpredictable strangulation of meaning.* I shall value correction if this is wrong.

Continuing the test of small terms, let us see whether the poet-reader relationship is susceptible of diagraming as a special example of the simple conmmunication system just described, and, if so, whether further analogizing is suggested:



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No one, I hope, will quarrel with the equation of "poet" with "source," "reader" with "receiver," and "paper and ink" with "transmission means."

The poet's memory I take to include his storage of knowledge and remembered feeling as well as the constantly forming and dissolving relations among them, whether or not these are accessible to recovery and withdrawal by conscious volition. His encoder I have called "creative association." Here the mantic choice is made among all possible poems, lines of poems, and words within lines that his memory can furnish material for, and these choices are encoded in a poem. The reversing arrow connecting memory and creative association indicates that a feedback process is at work, that images and ideas are drawn up, inspected for aptness, and often rejected for the purpose at hand and returned to storage. The busier this track in both directions, I venture, the closer will the encoded poem approach the best poem this particular poet can write this particular morning to convey this particular meaning. It is probably to underline the obvious to point out here that much, if not most, of the encoding process is subsurface mystery to the poet himself. Edgar A. Guest and the writers of greeting card verse are almost certainly relatively more aware of what they are doing, are more purposeful, than was Coleridge or Eliot. They are of lower entropy, are more ordered and predictable.

Now the finished poem is set in type, printed, and finds its way to the eyes of the reader. The reader's decoder is his "sympathetic association." As he reads, and reads again, his sympathetic association is continuously, with greater or less success, choosing from among all his stored knowledge and remembered feeling, first, to discover identities and parallels there with those suggested by the poem, and second, to meet, with that sudden familiar latch-up of certainty that is his deepest delight, a new and utterly unexpected linking within him of images he has had all along but never thought to associate. The poem, if successful for this reader, now passes into his memory, and the new linkage just achieved will never again be broken.

(That the process of writing a poem, publishing it, and having it read by the ideal reader is a complex and dangerous affair of high entropy, when compared, say, with the making and receiving of a telephone call, is suggested by comparing the number of poems written and read in a day with the number of telephone calls completed in the same time.)

In the diagram of the poetic process I have used "nonmeaning" as the analogue of noise. Even assuming that poet and reader are sympathetic (that source and receiver are compatible), nonmeaning of various sorts intrudes to prevent total success (efficiency) of the poem. Nonmeaning affects the composition of the poem because no poet can perfectly prevent entrance into the poem of "unmeaning repetitions, habitual phrases, and other blank counters." Most poems contain connectives and other small weak words, enforced compromises with a demanding rhyme scheme or metrical pattern, and simple wrong choice among the memory material.

Nonmeaning attacks the transmission means—the printed poem itself—simply and generally slightly, taking the form of typographical errors, blurred print and bad design—all of which degrade the meaning of the poem somewhat from that with which the poet invested it.

Nonmeaning at the destination, within the reader, is generally an occulting phenomenon: misreading, reading with less than complete attention, or reading with an intention not the poet's. The common quality of these absorptive or deflective moments is that they are unpredictable, and so qualify as analogues for forms of noise under our test of small terms.

So far, I think, we are on firm ground. Let us now examine some of the other quantities manipulated by the mathematics of communication theory, to discover whether each has a logically or intuitively persuasive cross-link with an analogous quantity in the poetic process.

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Bandwidth, in oscillatory communication systems such as those using sound, electromagnetic radiation or light, is the width of the portion of the spectrum reserved to the particular system under study. The wider the band, the more and subtler the information that can be sent on the channel without distortion. A telephone conversation may be transmitted with perfect intelligibility over a channel four kilocycles per second wide. Good reproduction of music requires a bandwidth at least as great as that of human hearing—about twenty kilocycles. A good television picture may be sent down a channel four megacycles wide. In other words, the more complex the signal, and the subtler the steps of difference between possibly adjoining quanta of message intelligence, the wider must be the band. The telegraph system that is required to go only "click" or "clack"—and that at rather slow intervals—is a very narrow-band affair compared with a music system that must make plain the difference between the A of the violin and the same A of a viola. Anna Pavlova could communicate little of her art to an audience if she were confined in a telephone booth. She could do more in a one-car garage, but to exploit her full range of possible movement, she must have the entire stage.

What, in poetry, fixes the limits of maximum possible complexity of message, and the greatest subtlety of adjoining shades or steps of meaning? Is it not some dimension of the *vocabulary* employed? At least one difference between a Mother Goose rhyme and a Shakespearean sonnet is in the size of the reservoir of words from which each was drawn. Sheer size, however, is not quite all the matter; a poet with a large vocabulary of dental, economic and ordnance words could not on that account alone credibly consider himself better equipped to write good poems than his competitor whose vocabulary, although less populous, was strong in the center general words of his language. Moreover, there appears to be an upper asymptotic limit to the usefulness of bulk in a vocabulary; the poet's audience flakes away rapidly to small size as his words become more recondite. (In communication terms, source and receiver are mismatched.)

I sense that rather than bulk, *density* of vocabulary is the real poetic analogue of bandwidth. According to Mario Pei, writing in *The Story of English,* our language is the richest of all in its variety of ways to say nearly the same thing; very small shades of meaning successfully intended by the poet are successfully understood by the reader.

Now consider signal strength. In communication theory, signal strength is the power of the stream of symbols that add together to make the message. It is not just the power of the unmodulated bias current of a telephone system, or of the unmodulated carrier wave of a radio system; it is the strength of the fully modulated signal. In the ideal communication system functioning ideally, only enough power is invested at the input to assure that the receiver attends exclusively to the chosen signal. More power than this is wasted, since exclusive has no superlative; less power than this is inadequate, because the receiver may then attend simultaneously to signals not meant for it.

The operative words that suggest the poetic analogue of signal strength are "intention" and "attention." To assure successful conveyance of his meaning to his reader, the poet must employ every device he commands to engage the whole attention of his reader—intellectual, emotional and unconscious. To that end the poet exerts himself to canalize his meaning—to reduce its diffuseness—and to achieve "a more than usual state of emotion, with more than usual order." Proven techniques for this purpose are use of meter, rhyme, grammatical inversion, ellipsis, image, metaphor, significant silence and visual design of the lines on the page; there are probably others that I and past poets have not thought of yet. The measure of the poet's success is how nearly completely he effects in the reader a momentary suspension of his quotidian

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concerns in favor of attention to the poem.

The last analogue I shall venture here in the test of small terms is that for system capacity. This is the quantity solved for in the equations of communication theorists. The capacity of a given system is measured in number of bits of information per unit time that the system will convey from source to receiver with any chosen permissibility of error. Until Claude Shannon derived the fundamental law that determines system capacity, no one could know positively what to expect from a system until it had been built and tested.

System capacity has a simple, if frightening, poetic analogue: worth. The worthiest poem, the best poem for a given poet, reader and message, is that one that reproduces in the reader the tautest, densest, most accurate simulacrum of the poet's own feeling.

It is important to remember that as a communication system comprises one source and one receiver, so the poetic analogue comprises one poet and one reader. A poem that is very good for one reader may fail with the next. Very possibly, the greatness of a poem is a function of the number and kinds of readers for whom it succeeds, and the length of time across which it is successful. Discussion of greatness, however, is beyond the scope of this paper.

Now, to complete the analogy undertaken, we need only to columnate the results so far and insert our new terms in Shannon's basic equation:

Communication Theory

Symbol	*Definition*	*Poetic Analogue*
C	Capacity	Worth
B	Bandwidth	Vocabulary Density
P_s	Signal Strength	Intention - Attention
P_n	Noise Strength	Nonmeaning

The basic equation is: $C = B \log_2 (1 + \frac{P_s}{P_n})$

For those with no more than normal ability to visualize and feel the relative weight of each factor or term in a mathematical statement such as this, it is helpful to hold all factors but one constant while varying that one within some arbitrary range of possible movement, to see how the shape of the whole statement varies, which is, admittedly, somewhat like trying to learn all about cats by studying the lumping movements of a bag with six inside; it is rather slow, but it works.

For this purpose, consider how $\log_2$ of X varies as X is varied:

X	$\log_2 X$
1	0
9	3.2
9,999	13.3

From this little table it will readily be seen that with no P_s (Intention-Attention) in the system at all, there can be no message; if the reader's attention is not caught, there is no worth to the poem. At the other extreme, if the reader's attention is caught completely (if P_s is very high), while nonmeaning (P_n) in the poem is held to the least value possible within a flawed language, the term in parentheses, although it grows, grows slower than its inner relation $\frac{P_s}{P_n}$, familiarly called the signal-to-noise ratio. This surely suggests that after the first kiss, the first effort of the poet to achieve a high value for $\frac{P_s}{P_n}$, any further effort of his to increase this value by re-

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vision and polishing is repaid by only slight growth of the logarithmic term, provided that the poet is innately the sort who commands attention at once whatever he tries, and who has an ear quick to his own bumbling. On the other hand, revision will profit the poet of low voice who tends to wander. The practical expression of the first poet's problem is, in the words of one of Saul Bellow's characters in *The Adventures of Augie March,* "Either it comes easy or it don't come at all." The parallel practical expression of the second poet's problem is, "Bully it a little more, Jack, you'll get it." The first poet, after the second draft, either accepts what he has done as the best he can do, or tears it up and starts over. The second poet revises calmly late into the night, until the logarithmic curve flattens out overhead and becomes shelter.

The weight of the right side of the equation varies *directly* with bandwidth, however. Always presuming a matched source and receiver, doubling the bandwidth doubles the capacity of the system. Any increase in subtlety and density of the poet's palette must result in a proportional increase of the poem's worth, which suggests how it happens that very great poems are written about very small things.

Now, the chief logical defect of this extended analogy is that there would seem to be no way to *measure* the quantities in the poetic equation. Both dimensions and numbers are absent. What are the units and measuring scales of quantities like "vocabulary density" and "intention-attention"? At this point it is necessary to recall something that most of us have forgotten: We are so familiar with the idea of numbers and the homely utility of dimensions that we use them as if they were as real as trees and stones—as if they had existed forever. Yet a joule cannot *be* without an erg, an erg without a dyne and a centimeter, a dyne without a gram and a second—or a gram, a centimeter and a second without a man who some time in the past decided what they were to mean, and announced his decision as fiat. It seems to me less preposterous to define vocabulary density in scalar units of, say, percentages of Shakespeare's vocabulary than to define a yard as the distance between the king's nose and the tip of his thumb. The man who says, "If it can't be measured, it isn't scientific," is the same man who will eagerly be a juryman in a judging of the relative beauty of five young women ranging from attractive to lovely. That successive judgings on successive days by successive teams of judges produce unanimous and serially reproducible results does not strike him as scientific, but it ought to. The present lack of an ensemble of aesthetic dimensions is by no means proof that one cannot be invented.

Fully conscious that I have barely opened the door, I agree that the ideas offered here are outrageous, and will offend many who reflexively defend art against science and science against art, but I hope that those who have not yet taken garrison position will find entertainment and instruction in pushing these counters about for themselves, discovering with little shocks of delight the many persuasive parellels that leap to the eye. Surely Coleridge, that intellectual ferret ready to try any hole however small, would approve the adventure. After all, he began it.

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ART AND LETTERS

The Festival of Vietnamese Music

RICHARD FRANKO GOLDMAN

Not long ago, New York City was the scene of a "Cultural Showcase Festival Fortnight," the splendor of which was matched only by the extent of the effect it failed to have on anything. One is staggered by the variety and quality of its attractions, and can wonder only how next year's Fortnight can possibly surpass it, which, in the nature of things, it obviously must do. We must always set records, in culture as in athletics, or even in simple statistical matters of a general nature. One can hardly fail to note the tone of genuine disappointment in the voice of the announcer or in the paragraph in the press over the failure of Labor Day automobile casualties to exceed last year's. New York's 1967 Showcase, however, will be hard to beat, when one considers that it included everything from an exhibit entitled "Your Stake in the Atom" to paintings of Staten Island, from a garden party in Brooklyn to a symposium at the Waldorf for "1,000 of the city's leaders in the arts and sciences," from two performances by the Joffrey Ballet to a show of chrysanthemums at the Queens Botanical Gardens. The mind, as they say, boggles at the culture that is manifest, even without considering the "twelve workshops sponsored by the New York Showcase Foundation." These, as listed in the New York *Times*, were:

S.O.S. (Sources of Support)—Government; S.O.S.—Private; Unions—Patrons and Partners in the Arts; Reaching the Great Audiences; Educational Institutions and the Arts and Sciences; the Mass Media; (Cultural) Gaps and Overlaps; the Turnstile and the Ticket Office; Cultural Institutions as Educational Resources; *New Directions; Promotional Techniques;* and the City as an Environment for the Arts and Sciences.

One is always happy to note that Cultural Showcases and Festivals seldom bother with art or artists. This saves the latter considerable time, which they are at liberty to employ in composing, writing or painting, leaving the serious problems to others. The artists may have their private thoughts, and may even attempt to contemplate atoms, chrysanthemums and resources in their own ways. They can also stay at home and think about the leaders in the arts and sciences and wonder where they are being led.

Many of them are aware that the Cultural Showcase Festival Fortnight is merely one of the events in the continuing 24-hour-a-day Festival of Vietnamese Music that has been going on for a long time, and which, with funds provided by foundations, by government, and by other S.O.S., shows no signs of becoming less audible. But of the true nature of the Festival, or of Vietnamese music itself, fewer are aware. Most simply know that the Festival is taking place, and have an uneasy feeling that they are part of it. Many, of course, are delighted to attend, and wish only to become more prominent participants. In reality, there is not much choice, or anywhere else to go.

The varieties of Vietnamese music are countless, and it is played on many instruments. It sounds bravely and loudly in

✪ This is RICHARD FRANKO GOLDMAN's third appearance in the ART AND LETTERS column. Mr. Goldman is a writer and critic, and a practicing professional musician.

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politics as well as in art, in mass media as well as in the conferences of special groups or in learned journals, in educational institutions as well as in commercial entertainment. Eventually it may be the only music we know, for its nature is to absorb and alter everything it reaches. It imposes its style far and wide, for its volume is immense enough to obliterate other noise. It tends to be universal in the sense that all of its expressions must in the long run mean the same thing: entertainment, education, information, culture, art and politics are to use the same notes and modes, in much the same combinations. Eventually art becomes culture, education becomes entertainment, entertainment becomes information, and so on. Each equation may also be read backwards; that is one of the achievements of Vietnamese music. Devotees of the art happily assume that there can be an *audience* for education, just as there are consumers for culture.

One notes that the C.S.F.F.—a representative effort that is duplicated daily in enlightened portions of the world—impartially includes art, education, mass media, science, culture, horticulture, atoms, unions, ticket offices and government. (Professional football, anti-Communism and marching bands are perhaps being saved for next year's Showcase.) No one is sure, and no one cares, which belongs with what, what is relevant to which, who sings alto, or where one song ends and the next strikes up. This is the very essence of Vietnamese music, which is the misrepresentation and confusion of all other music. But it is understood that no one is supposed to listen carefully to Vietnamese music, for it cannot stand analysis; it is merely to be heard, like an omnipresent Muzak that prevents conversation. It is the art of the inattentive and the indiscriminate, and also of the aesthetically and morally obtuse. Every sound is included, and everyone may play an instrument if he chooses. Competence is not necessary. One tune is as good as another, and the province of one is the province of all.

But when aesthetic judgment is suspended, as it must be during the Festival, it is possible that moral sensibility soon ceases to exist. On this, Plato, Schiller and Sir Herbert Read, among others, have spoken eloquently. Vietnamese music is not only the great inclusive lie about art, culture and education—poured into our ears with all the persuasiveness of the most advanced promotional techniques, which are, to be sure, the only techniques of the Festival that command professional seriousness and skill—it is the lie about everything: about the lives we live or are supposed to live or might wish to live. It is the substitution of the trivial for the important, the conversion of what might be meaningful into senseless distraction, the leveling of every value and the suppression of every standard. The texts of Vietnamese songs are nonsense rhymes about art or culture or education or democracy or war, or happy slogans about such moral and intellectual detours as The Clean Bomb. Vietnamese music provides the accompaniment for the ritual dance of the semieducated, the morally blank and the unconcerned.

The Festival is inevitably pretentious. It is the nursery school in cap and gown, which is a symptom of danger and not to be laughed at. The educational and cultural value of a Festival exhibit entitled "Your Stake in the Atom" is predictable. Yet the Festival sponsors correctly assume that this will be taken seriously, as one is supposed seriously to accept the usual half-hour on "educational" television, typically a random smattering or scattering of superficial information on such seethingly compelling subjects as bookbinding in sixteenth-century Denmark, the habits of the brine shrimp, or the prehistory of San Marino. These are all excellent Vietnamese music; they distract and pass the time, and keep people off the streets. These bits and pieces of separate and usually irrelevant pasts and pursuits, this peep show of information and ordinary gibberish, are simple and mindless amusements, bearing about the same relation to education and culture as most official pronouncements on the war in Vietnam bear to truth or morality.

Vietnamese music is a large part of our information and news, but of course if it

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comes from someone we do not like, or are not supposed to like, it becomes propaganda. It can be propaganda for art or culture or education as well as for war or business. Each can mean anything, and the propaganda, in addition to providing its own definitions ("War is Peace," as Orwell observed), can be used for suppression as well as promotion. For suppression exists in the arts as well as in politics, and in a very real sense Vietnamese music suppresses that of Mozart and Beethoven, whose art requires the kind of attention that the din of Vietnamese music makes almost impossible to give.

Long submission to Vietnamese music has its other consequences, and perhaps not the least of these is that we end literally in Vietnam. The arias sung by Mr. Goldberg at the United Nations, the edifying columns of Mr. Howard Taubman on the arts, the dramatic recitatives of most commencement orators, differ little in kind; they are special varieties of Vietnamese music. They are closely related to our national art of advertising and to our national folk music, the television or radio commercial. We laugh or cry over these as the humor takes us, while we half believe in them because we cannot escape them, and we sing them because they are truly our music. Our news and information, our propaganda and our advertising, are purveyed with the same intonation and in much the same prose style. (A recent I.B.M. advertisement proclaims in large capital letters: IT IS NOW VITAL THAT AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN FORGET HOW TO WRITE.) We have our daily treat of wars and riots, of rumors and duplicity, of air pollution and the thousand other atmospheric conditions that affect us, and *U.S. News and World Report* can cheerfully offer us *26 Weeks of News Like This for only $2.87!*, while no one bats an eye at the comedy. Surely this is the most magnificent bargain ever offered to anyone, living or dead. At least it will have to do until, as we have been promised, we have the war—any war—brought to us directly, in the comfort of our air-conditioned rooms, live and in color.

The "1,000 leaders in the arts and sciences," in their solemn assembly at the Waldorf, with, one hopes, enough champagne to think by, will no doubt have voted as usual to ratify the obvious and endow the meaningless. Next year's Festival will be an improvement, in variety and volume, over this year's, but it will again be designed by people with nothing to do, but something to sell; with no convictions, but many notions; by people unprepared or unable to assimilate or to value anything vital in art (or, for that matter, any vital information), or to address themselves to any important question bearing on culture, among the first of which in our times may well be how to deal with Vietnamese music and its continuing Festival.

Of the native music of Vietnam, as practiced on its home grounds, we learn that it began with an Obscure Period, lasting until about the tenth century, and that afterward the course of its development was determined in part by a distinction between *La Grande Musique* and *La Petite Musique*. We are also told by musicologists that there is, and this can be no surprise, a lack of precision in Vietnamese musical terminology. It is not difficult to ascertain where *La Grande Musique Viétnamienne* flourishes today. That we hear it constantly should not dull us to the corrupting nuances of *La Petite Musique* which sings all around us, orchestrated in every column of the daily paper, and which so penetrates and confounds us that we now can seldom hear any music that might help us.

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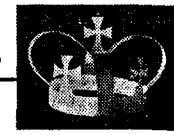
COLUMBIA  COLUMBIA

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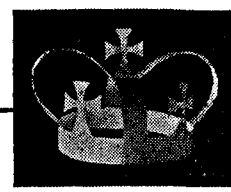

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The Revolving Bookstand . . . . . .

The City: A Test of National Will

CITIES IN A RACE WITH TIME. Progress and Poverty in America's Renewing Cities. *By Jeanne R. Lowe. Random House. $10.*

Reviewed by ABRAHAM RIBICOFF

Contrary to popular myth, Americans have done pretty well in the city. We have been there for several decades, and found a wide range of social, economic and political choice in cities of varying size, location and opportunity. And now that science and technology have given us the chance to build the kind of urban environment we claim we want, the journey to the twenty-first century holds as much promise as any trip to the moon. And more of us will be on board.

But both the past and the future can be misleading. Because the burning issue in America today is not how well the majority has done as an urban nation or what kind of life styles we will create by the year 2000. The issue is how—and whether—we unite a divided nation and bring into the American mainstream all those who feel separated from this country for reasons of technology, economic status, and race. And that is the problem to which Jeanne Lowe has addressed herself in a thoroughly researched, well-written, and deeply compassionate book.

Cities in a Race with Time is a large book that is rich in facts and ideas. That one cannot fully digest it in one reading is a reflection on the subject rather than the author. Our cities, and the problems contained within them, do not lend themselves to glib descriptions or summaries. And Miss Lowe has not taken the easy way out. She has presented case studies of five cities that have achieved "noteworthy" success in the new and uncertain field of city building. She traces the history of each one with great skill and takes the reader down some very complicated paths and relationships among institutions and individuals without sacrificing either clarity or important detail. In short, she neither oversimplifies nor obfuscates—no small achievement given the subject or the times.

She chose her cities—New York, Pittsburgh, Washington, Philadelphia and New Haven—because each "has been or still is influential as a pattern-setter and front-runner." That does not mean they are model cities in the sense that they have solved all their problems and found the key to preventing new ones. Three have been racked with violence in recent years. But that is hardly a sufficient reason for throwing in the towel. We were naïve in the first place to place all our faith in a single program, such as urban renewal, or in the false hope that a twenty-year effort could cure a hundred years of neglect and alienation that has now erupted in violence. As Miss Lowe puts it:

> Urban renewal has revealed how poorly prepared Americans are to create better cities. . . . In the case of urban renewal, government has been the handy whipping boy and is blamed because, in trying to remove the mess of the past, it must act where urban illness is greatest. Some object to the use of renewal for commerce and luxury housing. Probably the single most important reason for public concern and disaffection, however, is that urban renewal has lifted the rug off long-submerged and new slums and forced the community to look at its social and racial problems while it still lacked the means and perhaps the desire to solve them.

✪ ABRAHAM RIBICOFF, who is United States Senator for Connecticut, is chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Executive Reorganization which recently held year-long hearings on the federal role in urban affairs.

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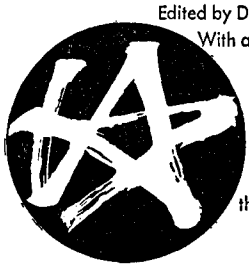

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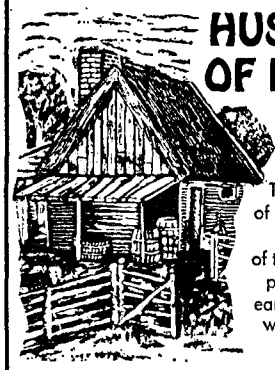

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By Raymond Firth

While spanning some 40 years of Firth's famous investigation of the Tikopia, these essays include reflections from his 1966 visit — on the impact of this primitive society's contacts with "modern" culture.

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By John K. Forrest

This guide to distinguishing between the oratorical pretensions and the logical realities of words like "freedom," "humanity," and "morality" has *already* been tested through years of classroom development by Professor Forrest and other philosophers on several campuses.

Published Nov. 3 / $5.95

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There is more than enough blame to go around, and none of us can absolve ourselves, either individually or in terms of the institutions we represent, by pointing out the failures of others. The federal government, as Miss Lowe suggests, may have received too many whippings. But on the other hand, Washington has hardly been the shining liberator and builder of the city. Perhaps this is beyond the scope of the federal government, and we would be wise to realize some of the limitations of what we often regard as an all-powerful machine. For even the most gigantic federal effort will go for naught if local leadership and organizations are not responsive to the problems of their own cities. However, the basic commitment can be stated *only* by the federal government—and that includes both the Congress and the Executive branch.

So now that we have been in the city-building business for twenty years, where do we go from here? We can no longer fall back on our ignorance of urban problems. To be sure, we are unfamiliar with a host of issues and situations that city building must deal with. But our age of innocence is over. The richest country in the world must become more than a schoolboy in the city gathering facts for a term paper. The analogy may seem harsh. Yet in view of the unsolved problems that threaten to blow the lid off our cities and our response to them, it seems accurate. For our national effort seems pitifully out of scale with the enormity of the crisis.

Why is this so? I can think of many reasons, but they all come down to one: that we are unwilling to act upon the information we have. We prefer to devise elaborate theories of urban behavior and develop techniques of systems analysis as if the articulation of these plans were equal to solving the problem. The word has become tantamount to the deed. We seek out new technology in the hope that it will provide a cost-free solution. We offer visions of the future to people who are trapped in the present. We engage in national debates about what causes riots and what they represent in societal terms when we have mountains of evidence about the high rate of unemployment in our central cities, the low quality of the public schools, the number of substandard housing units, and the high crime rates.

We seek refuge in historical precedents and comfortable, simple answers. Why, many of us ask, cannot the Negro, the Puerto Rican, and the poor white lift himself up out of the ghetto as did the Irishman, the Italian, and the Jew before him? But we reject the explanation that this is a new era, and that the nature of opportunity in the city has changed. People are people, we say, and if they have the courage and initiative, there is nothing to it. Look at all the successful men who came out of the lower east side of New York.

As a people, we are dedicated to the concept of progress and change. But when it comes to economics and lifting oneself by the bootstraps, we are convinced that time stands still. We fail to see that what worked fifty or sixty years ago doesn't work today. "The era of the self-made, uneducated small businessman who could rise out of the slums is vanishing," Miss Lowe writes. "He is no longer the backbone of the middle class; he is becoming part of the lower middle class or the poor." And she continues:

> This highly demanding, specialized age affords the newcomer fewer of the jobs which he has traditionally filled and permits him a shorter period to become a self-sustaining member of the city economy. It also robs him of the realistic hope which served as an economic yeast for earlier generations.

Not only is the ghetto dweller of 1967 starting with less, but he is asked to achieve more in a shorter period of time. That is hardly the kind of race one would choose for himself if a realistic choice existed.

Rarely—and despite all the gaps in our information—has a public problem been delineated as completely and vividly as has the crisis in our central cities. Jeanne Lowe has added to that clarity by writing a comprehensive book about urban renewal that takes full notice of the economic and human factors.

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Miss Lowe is correct in stating that our earlier efforts did indeed lift the rug off some ugly problems at a time when we lacked the means and the desire to solve them. But we no longer lack an appreciation of the scope of the problem or the size of the commitment we need to make. The cities are at last a test of our national will.

A Timely and Valuable History

THE FEDERAL THEATRE, 1935-1939: Plays, Relief, and Politics. *By Jane DeHart Mathews. Princeton University Press. $8.50.*

Reviewed by STANLEY KAUFFMANN

"The brief story of the Federal Theatre was as dramatic as any play it staged." The formulation is pat, the comparison of life and art is naïve, but this opening sentence of Mrs. Mathews' summary chapter suggests the basic quality of the Federal Theatre's career. In 1940 Hallie Flanagan, who had been National Director of the project, published *Arena,* her impassioned and invaluable account of the Federal Theatre's hectic four-year life. Mrs. Mathews rightly felt that a view in longer perspective was needed, and this study, which "grew from a seminar paper into a book," is sympathetic and informative. The good feeling and hard work in the book make its lapses all the more regrettable.

Mrs. Mathews is an historian. Historian, without adjective, means, of course, political historian. She has perceived (her subtitle underscores it) that the Federal Theatre was both a political creation and an anomaly in our political history. Of all the arts projects under the W.P.A. in the thirties, the theater was inevitably the most troublesome to the government. (Mrs. Flanagan said in 1938: "Giving apoplexy to people who consider it radical for a government-sponsored theatre to produce plays on subjects vitally concerning the governed is one function of the theatre.") Mrs. Mathews has seen her subject basically, but not entirely, from a political view. She has seen that the Federal Theatre was not primarily a cultural effort, that it was created by government to help some of the governed in a time of economic stress, and that a three-way conflict—among the concepts of art, politics and relief—was the venture's curse from its birth. After making nine hundred and twenty-four productions in four years —from Shakespeare to vaudeville—and employing an average of nine thousand people a year, the project was killed by Congress: because of the "apoplexy" Mrs. Flanagan described, because the project was smeared by Red-baiters and by reactionaries averse to this kind of government spending, because the high tide of enthusiasm for the New Deal had receded, and because troubles in Europe began to crowd the American political scene.

Besides its well-articulated account of the political environment of the Federal Theatre, one of the book's chief virtues is its portrait of Mrs. Flanagan. In this lady's own book, her clarity of vision, her energy and courage, were, naturally, not emphasized; here they get the memorial they deserve. Very much of the Federal Theatre's work was artistically poor; but, first, Mrs. Flanagan usually knew this before she was told and, second, she did as well as was humanly—superhumanly—possible. She organized regional theater projects around the country in a matter of months; overcame objections from the very professionals she was trying to help because the project smacked of charity; confronted the Broadway Establishment's worries about unfair competition; battled harassment from the reactionary press and from headline-hungry congressmen; found plays and designers and directors and actors and theater buildings; traveled frequently around the country (in the pre-jet age); and never lost sight of the hope that this project born in philanthropy might shuck its beginnings and emerge as a national *theater.* If Mrs.

✪ STANLEY KAUFFMANN is the associate literary editor of the *New Republic,* to which he contributes regularly. A former drama critic of the New York *Times,* he is at present the film critic of the *New American Review* and a visiting professor of drama at Yale University.

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Mathews' book did nothing else, its account of Mrs. Flanagan's wonderful four-year fight would make it valuable—not as a lace valentine, but as hard history.

But there are serious imperfections in the work. Mrs. Mathews is not a theater specialist, and she does not ask all the questions of her material that a theatrical reader wants answered. Many, many important details are missing: biographical information on major figures, dates and places of important productions, lengths of run, casts, sometimes even the authors of new plays. If she can tell us that *It Can't Happen Here* got seventy-eight thousand lines of publicity before it opened, she might at least have told us who was in it—at least in New York. The production record in the appendix of *Arena,* incomplete though it is, should have been included here, and might have been expanded.

Mrs. Mathews writes in what might be called the postpedantic style. She is anxious not to be dry, but her anxiety is sometimes apparent. "Hallie Flanagan toyed with the problem . . ." "Hallie Flanagan gradually hammered out a plan. . . ." "Hallie Flanagan worked frantically in her stifling, Washington cubicle . . ." Besides the *Time*-style diction, the repeated use of Mrs. Flanagan's full name (the only person treated that way) gives that lady's story a touch of late Hemingway.

In the matter of value judgments, Mrs. Mathews, like all historians of the ephemeral arts, must rely on contemporary criticism and comment. Occasionally the quotation marks get washed away by her enthusiasm, and she offers judgments as statements. That I saw many of the Federal Theatre productions in New York and disagree with many of the opinions entered here is not important, perhaps; but I could not suppress a slight shiver at the demonstration before my eyes of an ancient axiom: Historians do not record history, they create it.

Nevertheless I venture two small corrections before this creation gets firmly fixed. The role of Faustus in Marlowe's play was not Orson Welles's "first major acting role." He had previously played Marchbanks in Katharine Cornell's touring production of *Candida* and had played the leading role in Sidney Kingsley's *Ten Million Ghosts* on Broadway. And this statement, derived though it may be from the New York *Times,* is arrant nonsense: "*The Cradle Will Rock* would one day become to America what Kurt Weil's [*sic*] *Dreigroschenoper* is to Germany." What cultivated German could not whistle Weill's tunes? How many Americans could whistle three notes of Blitzstein?

Still, faults and all, Mrs. Mathews has caught such fire from her subject that she has lifted her book above most academic expeditions into art. The work also has a particular timeliness. This country is beginning to demolish the barriers between government subsidy and art. In August 1967 the National Council on the Arts, itself a milestone of progress, sent recommendations to Congress for an appropriation next year of $139 million—and developed these recommendations *at Congress' request.* The Federal Theatre thirty years ago was a huge precedent step in the, I think, necessary evolution toward subsidized American theaters. Complemented by *Arena,* Mrs. Mathews' book helps to illuminate part of that torturous American social evolution, the movement toward formal responsibility for American culture.

With a Narrative Flavor

THE WIND SOUTHERLY. *By Heather Ross Miller. Harcourt, Brace & World. $3.95.*

Reviewed by WILLIAM E. STAFFORD

Poems these days often ride prose cadences in a varying, fervent speech that does not court regularity or notable imagery, but signals by its form on the page:

✪ WILLIAM E. STAFFORD's poetry and criticism have been widely published. The most recent collection of his poems is *The Rescued Year.* Mr. Stafford, who is a professor of English at Lewis and Clark College, won the National Book Award in 1963 for *Traveling through the Dark.*

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Ralf Dahrendorf. These ten essays by Europe's leading sociological theorist deal with important issues on the borderline between sociology and social philosophy, and demonstrate the author's deep insight into history and political analysis. He holds that the structures of power in which the political process takes place not only originate change and give it direction, but also produce the conflicts that create new solutions to human problems and cast doubt on them as soon as they have been created. $8.50

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"Poetry." *The Wind Southerly* consists of such poems. They display a reckless, quirky mind that darts confidently from private topics into assumed familiarity. The reader hitches along like a new friend through a tour of intriguing family relics. The tour frequently hints at stories like homemade myths, with local origins and vigorously immediate allusions.

The result often is a wild, original poem that yet has a hush of conviction, as the language descends to touch earth and to gain reinforcement from any quick, internal consistency the writer can happen upon.

"October 1965," dedicated to Randall Jarrell, is a good example. By accumulating details that are charged with implied feeling, but then steadfastly refusing to overstate, the writer achieves force. First come flat descriptions of the context, with phrases that sprinkle down the page and continually assert the everyday: "It is too sunny. The wind southerly." "He read to us." "The bus changed on Spring Garden." "We sat." Then the poem verges into its intensity:

The world lilted. It trembled and it sank.
We sat. So comfortably we sat and didn't thank.
We did not mean it then,
And now we shall never mean it.

This forcing of flat language into pieces intended as poems creates a special attitude in the reader and can result in thrills of authenticity: the reader confronts human values presented as real, based on feelings, not on conventions. Characters become helplessly angry or in love or admiring or disgusted—not conventionally motivated or right-minded and stable. The reader becomes a victim of events that arrive without literary preparation.

This tension between expected language and less-than-expected cannot work forever, and it works better with some kinds of effects than others. But it happens that Heather Ross Miller does have other characteristics that second the abrupt-conviction effect. Her usual stance of avoiding comfort and confronting the worst is one such seconding influence. In "December 1941: Little Brother," typically she details groundless comfortings about a lost brother and then turns at the end:

But my lesson sternly reads:
. . . stoned, ripped, and plundered.

The refusal to accept comfort and the readiness to use prosy, expository progressions cannot inhibit a lively inventiveness. Anything that occurs to the writer may be allowed its chance in the poem, and often that impulsiveness leads to striking felicities. The writer's confidence allows abrupt cadences; within a poem the language may modulate from patches of regularity and rhyme into prose tangles, and from clear exposition to weird narrative that skates along some brink of subliminal meaning. "Originality" would be one tag for such work; "roughness" would be another.

"The milldam is deaf with moss" is a line to demonstrate that vivid expressions occur; and in a poem titled "Path to the Sea" are many oceanic levels commanded into a graceful swirl:

. . . I have seen the winking shells, wet and tumbled,
Pressed upon sand like holy, broken windows.
They have said:
You are no longer a child.
You are no longer.
The bosun's pipe, the shell, and the sea became
Amberhaze against the pane,
Browning acorns in a bowl,
A wild chevron of geese on the wind,
And my orphan hand on the door.

One of the poems, "Sally Locke," calls to mind Masters' *Spoon River*, but also demonstrates that the earlier book, free as it was for its time, was comparatively regular. Compare Masters' "Lucinda Matlock" or "Petit the Poet" to a portion of "Sally Locke":

When I married Crawford in the preacher's parlor,
All my aunts said I had done well.
Then I went to keep his tall house
And to nurse his old mother.
She did not like my pie,
It was too sour, too sweet;
She would never eat anything I baked.
Soon my aunts began to shake their heads and said,
"Poor Sally."

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The ending of this poem displays many elements in the author's work: the conclusion stays flatly worded, and even exaggerates the matter-of-factness of the beginning; but it also forages among parts of an inexplicit narrative and suddenly enhances with exotic particulars:

They have put me into a nice grave and built a fence.
Cedars sprout near by and the blackberries cling on briers.
Wild deer run in the wood, I ponder many things in my dust
And would like to tell them to Crawford and his sons:
The sun seems to rise and set
In only a day;
The smell of the pine, underneath,
Is sweet;
I want to go and kiss my dear young babe,
But wolves howl in these woods
At night.

Finally, it is the flavor of narrative that most distinguishes this collection. These narratives are separate but persistently hover around the person of the teller. Often the reader does not receive particulars about characters mentioned (as in the "Little Brother" poem quoted earlier); instead, the attention is forced to rove through fragments of scattered recollection and related thoughts, as if the story has so long been assumed that it does not demand explicit telling: the reader becomes a participant, someone assumed familiar with details, but also suffering from a gradually lifting amnesia.

The last poem even sweeps several stories together and deliberately mixes them, dreamlike, as a child sinks to sleep in "A Story for Bedtime":

I am asleep. You are asleep.
Circe eats the ox. Foxfire burns. Circe eats the pea.
Trod on me, dead child,
Trod on me.

Several of the narratives bear the marks of actuality, as in the scattered references to World War II ("Little Brother" is one such). It is as if the experiences that touch the world must come to expression amid a seething of later experiences, thoughts and feelings, so that the conventions of writing poems are constantly subjected to the particulars of this author's actual life. Her book becomes original because she will not give up either her own cherished experiences or the wide, oceanic feeling of creation.

The same stubbornness that forces local references into the book seems to demand rigorously matter-of-fact language ("Her hair hung so straight down her back,/So straight, so black, so goddamned down—/ You wondered what held up that mess of hair"). And every local detail and every touch of carelessness in language proclaims the message of the book, stated in the first poem:

It was enchanting,
Enchanting because it marred,
Would not be washed away,
Would not be moved.

That stubbornness results in new accomplishment: force and object meet and modify each other, and strike out poems.

Good Reporting

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When the reviewer was a cub on the reporting staff of the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*

IRVING DILLIARD was a staff member of the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* for thirty-three years, and for about ten years was editor of the editorial page. He retired in 1960 to devote more time to writing and teaching and is currently Ferris Professor of Journalism and Public Relations at Princeton University.

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four decades ago, he heard the senior reporter and "rewrite man," Carlos F. Hurd, make, in a Saturday night lull, an observation that echoes across the years. Mr. Hurd looked at a cavernous wastebasket that was filling up with copies of earlier editions as the office boys brought fresh stacks from the press room. Then he said, somewhat to himself but loud enough for those of us around him to hear: "We write in water."

What he meant, of course, was that the reporting in one edition disappears almost without a trace as later editions, with their revised and updated accounts, come in unending succession.

This was true then for the vast amount of news writing, and it is true today for the great proportion; and yet, it was not wholly true in the 1920's and certainly is not entirely true today. For many years some of the best of newspaper writing has been preserved between hard covers. For example, and in a class by itself, there is the annual harvest from the several distinguished departments of the daily *Guardian*, published in Manchester, England. Fifteen of these *Bedside Guardians* now adorn the shelves of the collector who was fortunate enough to start at the beginning. Editorials, foreign correspondence, sports stories, features, columns, all have contributed to anthologies and to books by individual writers and editors—yes, and broadcasters.

For the first book listed above is by one of the most important and valuable of all our broadcasters, Edward R. Murrow. Ed Murrow quit broadcasting in 1961 to direct the United States Information Agency for the Kennedy Administration, and then died in 1965. Thus it is now more than six years since Murrow's sane, calm, constructive commentaries last came over the airwaves. *In Search of Light* serves the admirable purpose of bringing them back, in so far as spoken words can be brought back by the written. And for many young people, including those now of college age, this book will be the means by which they will become acquainted with the thought and action of Ed Murrow.

The span of almost twenty-five years covered by these broadcasts begins with the

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radio reporter in Vienna at the time of the arrival of the Nazi armed might in March 1938. As Murrow told it, everyone was "waiting and wondering" where and at what time Herr Hitler would appear. And the British, "like the rest of the world," were "doing nothing." Then the book presents representative broadcasts from London during the Munich Crisis. These were, so the collection's editor, Edward Bliss, Jr., says, "prototypes of all his broadcasts of the war years to come: what is happening, how does it relate to America, how does Commonman feel?" Mr. Bliss knows the Murrow career and its achievements so well that he is able to put much in his brief, tight, model paragraphs of introduction.

Here are the rooftop descriptions of London ablaze in the blitz. Here is the Christmas Eve in 1940 when the English church-bells did not ring, when people said, "So long, Mamie" and "Good luck, Jack," but never "A Merry Christmas." And here is that never-to-be forgotten broadcast of December 13, 1942, that gave the outside world its first glimpse of what was going on in Hitler's death mills. "One is almost stunned into silence," Murrow told his wireless audience, "by information reaching London. Some of it is months old, but it's eye-witness stuff supported by a wealth of detail and vouched for by responsible governments." Then he told what was happening: "Millions of human beings, most of them Jews, are being gathered up with ruthless efficiency and murdered."

Piecing together bits of information from the silent continent, from Holland and Norway and Poland, you have, he said, "a picture of mass murder and moral depravity unequaled in the history of the world." Calling it "a horror beyond what imagination can grasp," he reported on the brutality in the Warsaw ghetto:

> It was never a pleasant place even in peacetime. The business started in the middle of July. Ten thousand people were rounded up and shipped off. After that, thousands more went each day. The infirm, the old and the crippled were killed in their homes. Some of them were driven to the Jewish cemetery, and they killed them there. The others were put

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in freight cars; the floors were covered with quicklime and chlorine. Those who survived the journey were dumped out at one of three camps, where they were killed. At a place called Treblinka a huge bulldozer is used to bury the bodies. Since the middle of July these deportations from the Warsaw ghetto have been going on. For the month of September 120,000 ration cards were printed for the ghetto; for October only 40,000. The Jews are being systematically exterminated throughout all Poland. Nobody knows how many have committed suicide; nor does anyone know how many have gone mad. Some of the victims ask their guards to shoot them, and sometimes the guards demand a special fee for doing so. All this information and much more is contained in an official report issued by the Polish Government. And few people who have talked as I have with people who have escaped from Poland will doubt its accuracy. The phrase "concentration camps" is obsolete, as out of date as "economic sanctions" or "nonrecognition." It is now possible to speak only of extermination camps. . . . At Falstad camp, Russian prisoners of war were made to dig an open grave. No one knew who was to be killed. Then at eight o'clock in the morning a group of fifteen men were brought out and ordered to stand at attention. They stood there for eleven and a half hours until 7:30 in the evening. Then they were invited to listen to the announcement of their deaths. The following day they were taken to the edge of the big grave, stripped naked and shot. It seems that the Germans hope to escape retribution by the sheer magnitude of their crimes.

Of all Ed Murrow's public services, doubtless the greatest was in doing so much to wake up the country to the facts about the smokescreen "anti-Communist" carryings-on of Senator Joseph R. McCarthy. The first quoted mention of the Wisconsin demogogue came in reference to Alger Hiss and Secretary of State Dean Acheson. After that there were many, concerning the attacks on the Voice of America, on Ambassador Bohlen, on the Department of the Army, concerning the belated joining of the issue by the Eisenhower Administration when McCarthy challenged the White House by calling on two million federal employees to give him private information. ("The President, even before he was elected, did everything possible to appease

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the Senator, to make him a 'member of the team.' It didn't work. And once more the result of appeasement is conflict.")

Eventually Murrow dealt with just about everything in his five-thousand broadcasts —Hurricane Edna, the revolt in Hungary, the House Committee on Un-American Activities, the onrush of young Americans to colleges and universities, the low quality of television programs, even the effects of cigarette smoking on health (he died of cancer following the removal of a lung). His transcendent value was that he seemed nearly always to be thinking in terms of whether democracy was being furthered or hindered, and regularly he kept his hearers in mind, indeed seemed to be putting himself in their place.

"Perhaps the major speech of his career," the editor calls Murrow's address before radio and television news directors in Chicago in 1958. "The Conscience of the Airwaves" spoke plain words that needed saying:

> I am entirely persuaded that the American public is more reasonable, restrained and more mature than most of our industry's program planners believe. Their fear of controversy is not warranted by the evidence. I have reason to know, as do many of you, that when the evidence on a controversial subject is fairly and calmly presented, the public recognizes it for what it is—an effort to illuminate rather than to agitate. . . .
>
> Our history will be what we make it. If we go on as we are, then history will take its revenge, and retribution will not limp in catching up with us. We are to a large extent an imitative society. If one or two or three corporations would undertake to devote just a small fraction of their advertising appropriation along the lines that I have suggested, the procedure would grow by contagion; the economic burden would be bearable, and there might ensue a most exciting adventure—exposure to ideas and the bringing of reality into the homes of the nation. . . .
>
> This instrument can teach, it can illuminate; yes, and it can even inspire. But it can do so only to the extent that humans are determined to use it to those ends. Otherwise it is merely wires and lights in a box. There is a great and perhaps decisive battle to be fought against ignorance, intolerance and indifference. This weapon of television could be useful.

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Stonewall Jackson, who knew something about the use of weapons, is reported to have said, "When war comes, you must draw the sword and throw away the scabbard." The trouble with television is that it is rusting in the scabbard during a battle for survival.

As the handiwork of broadcaster Ed Murrow fully deserves an accessible place on library shelves, so also do the collections of newspapermen James Reston and Vermont Royster. Mr. Reston is widely known as editorial columnist in Washington for the New York *Times,* and his articles regularly appear in many other papers. Mr. Royster is the editor of the *Wall Street Journal,* now the country's first national newspaper with a circulation of more than a million copies distributed, thanks to modern production methods, each weekday morning from interior Maine to southern California.

Reston's *Sketches in the Sand* takes its title from words that Walter Lippmann wrote in an early issue of the *New Republic* in 1915: "A puzzled man making notes . . . drawing sketches in the sand that the sea will wash away." But, as with Murrow's, these selections from Reston and Royster are not to be obliterated so swiftly. For here are the materials of history, not all of equal importance to be sure, but the reports of eyewitnesses who themselves not infrequently become participants in major events.

Reston, a Scottish-born Calvinist who says he "cannot help preaching and raising hell," was not a good Associated Press sportswriter for nothing. He learned either at the University of Illinois or soon after his graduation in 1932 that competition for the reader's attention is terrific and that you had better write it interestingly, as well as accurately, if you have any hope of getting the reader to stay with you.

A newspaper column contains only a few words at most and so Reston sets himself down to making every one of them count. Thus: "All Presidents resent their critics but react to them in different ways. Franklin Roosevelt scorned them. Harry Truman denounced them. Dwight Eisenhower ignored them, and Lyndon Johnson

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has his own way. He confounds them by perpetuating what they condemn."

More specifically on President Johnson, he says:

> The pessimism and complexity of the modern world do not bother him. Unlike many of his intellectual critics, he is not paralyzed by excessive contemplation or doubt. He is all for the businessman making a pile, having made one himself. He believes in Horatio Alger's triumphant ragamuffin (who, after all, is Johnson). He believes in the hard doctrines of John Calvin and individual responsibility, and now that the planned deficit and tax cut have increased prosperity, he even believes a little in John Maynard Keynes. He is fiercely patriotic. He genuinely believes that God looks out for Uncle Sam. He has no doubt that this nation was set apart to achieve good and noble purposes; that America is indeed the New Arcadia, or will be if he has his way.

Summing up John F. Kennedy in the White House, Reston wrote "it is very likely" that historians "will be impressed with just this: his efforts to restrain those who wanted to be more violent in the cold war overseas and those who wanted to be more violent in the racial war at home." He called the assassinated Chief Executive, "a wonderfully attractive human being," and found it significant "that, unlike many Presidents in the past, the people who liked and respected him best were those who knew him best."

When General Eisenhower retired from the Presidency, Reston described him "as the most popular and most criticized American of the day." But he also had this to say, and it is worth remembering: "President Eisenhower at least maintained enough power to deter the big war, and the big depression, and that was his important if limited objective from the start." At the height of McCarthy's power, Reston wrote that "in this atmosphere of fear," McCarthy has "demonstrated that violence and deceit can be made to pay in American political life," and "he has silenced many honorable men in Congress and elsewhere, seized at least part of the machinery of his party, and tilted successfully with the President [Eisenhower] himself."

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Humor keeps cropping up, as when Reston pleads in the midst of the 1962–63 newspaper strike: "Dear Santa, All I want for Christmas is The New York Times . . ."; when he has his creation, "Uniquack," the "electronic truth detector," prepare a "standard Khrushchev speech"; when he fabricates a new Aesop fable replete with Fat Cat, Farmer Jackass, Chief Ant, Wise Old Owl, and in the end even a Moral; and when he spoofs Congress by dreaming up (April 2, 1961) "A Bill to Amend the Human Race" that rhymes in the best Walt Mason fashion: "Section 2: It shall be lawful after this for Democrats to give a kiss to any pretty little Vixen, or even Richard Milhous Nixon, so long as every day at dusk, the G.O.P. backs Mr. Rusk. . ."

In some ways the most valuable section is that on the press, for Reston does not hesitate to criticize the weaknesses and failures of his own craft to measure up to its responsibilities, opportunities, and plain functions.

A large part of the time Vermont Royster is expressing opinion shared by precious few others. But he states these notions so enchantingly that the reader who should be disagreeing forgets to dissent and goes on from one paragraph to the next for the sheer enjoyment of it. And the author does such a job of mixing pleasure with business that he seems to have his tongue in both cheeks.

Noting, for example, that office managers were reported as getting short-tempered with short skirts, Royster promptly pronounces this a shortsighted attitude, and suggests that the *Wall Street Journal* reporters who wrote a "roundup" on the subject "may have taken a too narrow view of their subject in limiting themselves to hemlines." Asserting "that the horizontal elevation of ladies' dresses, at the top as well as the hem, is a far better economic indicator than planetary relationships with the points of the Zodiac," he offers "historical evidence":

The present upward hemline movement coincides almost exactly with the great bull market. It began, rather timidly, in the middle of the

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war with a rise to about the halfway marker, then drifted slightly downward until, like the Dow-Jones industrial average, it rose sharply with the soaring sixties. Bustlines have tended more to follow bond prices; that, is to move contrariwise to interest rates. Not until the unpegging of the government-bond market in the fifties was there a marked downward decolletage. But with the sharp rise in the prime rate, both here and in Europe, bustlines have plunged until they are almost nonexistent. It's plain enough, then, why businessmen and economists ought to pay close attention to the rhythmic hemline and the undulating bustline.

Royster's Rule, which he intends to expound "at the next meeting of the Pickwick Club," is that "hemlines vary directly with the rise and fall of the GNP while bustlines rise and fall in inverse proportion."

Although many of his essays deal with modern materials, they are old-fashioned in that they wander about and, as Royster confesses, "wind up at a place that sometimes surprises me as well as the reader." There is no one he will not gibe. Turning to "sex and the robed judges," he picks out reading matter for each. Chief Justice Warren, "snuggling up to the fireplace, can break the monotony of involved patent briefs by reading one of the few extant copies of a little volume called *The Housewife's Handbook on Selective Promiscuity.*" He remembers that Justice White was a Rhodes Scholar and therefore suggests that he "might feel more comfortable with *The Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure,* the succulent biography of a lady known as Fanny Hill." For Justice Douglas he proposes "a neoteric book succinctly titled *Raw Dames.*"

Pessimistic about the immediate future—"who can avoid pessimism, looking at the state of the world and the behavior of the people in it"—he is "stubbornly optimistic about the long future," and consoled to remember that "the Dark Ages only lasted five hundred years." *A Pride of Prejudices* is a good book to get "a-holt" of (see page 39).

As We Saw the Thirties splendidly achieves its purpose, in the words of its

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from a sermon by Timothy Alden, first president of Allegheny College at South Church in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, on January 4, 1801.

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able planner and editor, sociologist Rita James Simon, "to offer to the generation of the sixties the opportunity to hear first person, eye-witness accounts of the purposes and goals of the important movements of the thirties by the men who led those movements."

Presented as addresses at the University of Illinois (1965–66), the eight essays record the memories and summations of people intimately associated with the political and social efforts following the economic crash of 1929. The participants, their topics and a thought from each follow.

Earl Browder (The American Communist Party): "The New Deal, with its inadequacies and mistakes (it was stingy in its social expenditures—even the Eisenhower interim was almost munificent by comparison—and its limitation of production represented an economic blind-alley) had put America on the road to the welfare state and thereby had cut the ground from under both the Socialist and Communist parties—yet it certainly had the enthusiastic support of the latter."

Hal Draper (The Student Movement): ". . . wherever there was action for progressive causes or voices were raised in dissent from the Establishment, there one was sure to find alumni of this student movement, who had gotten their political education and organizational training and experience in the American Student Union or the Student League for Industrial Democracy or the National Student League."

Granville Hicks (Writers): "The great danger of the decade was political dogmatism, to which many lesser writers succumbed but which the greater writers rose above. Its great virtue was strength of feeling, which, in literature, is not a negligible virtue."

A. J. Muste (My Experience): "But the Great Society, if there is to be one, will be a world phenomenon, not an American one. It will depend ultimately on how the United States resolves its relationships to the rest of the world, and whether the menace of war in the atomic age is dissipated."

Max Shachtman (Trotskyist View): "The purity and wholeness of [Trotsky's] commitment to the socialist ideal was unsurpassed and he was as unflagging in adversity, of which he had an ample share, as he was unaffected in victory."

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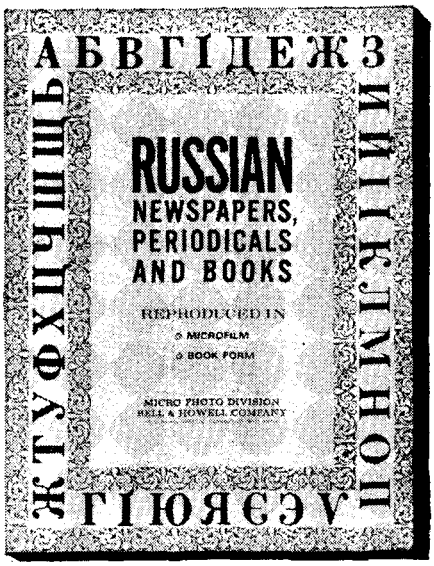

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Gerald L. K. Smith (Huey Long Movement): "Never overlook the fact that when any effort was made to defeat Huey Long, or his organization, or his purposes, or his legislation, the baronial elements always had the cooperation of the Roosevelt administration and other shifty groups."

Norman Thomas (Socialist Recollections): "and if I live to Moses' age, 120, I shall not look back with any doubt on the Socialist party's present foreign policy, including our opposition to military intervention in the Dominican Republic and South Vietnam."

Burton K. Wheeler (Years With Roosevelt): "I felt then and I feel now that the office of United States Senator is the finest there is—if you are a free man."

Fortunate is he who gets one of these books, quadruply so is he who comes into possession of them all!

About Perspective

THE CHANGING MIND. *By John Roddam. Foreword by Sir Julian Huxley. Little, Brown. $4.95.*

Reviewed by JOHN S. WALKER

Even we who are in a position to be witnesses may not appreciate the extent of the conquest of new scientific knowledge or understand the rate at which that conquest advances. This process proves exciting: a biology professor at Yale University reportedly opened a recent class with the statement that sixty percent of the content of the course had been unknown two years before.

One immediate consequence of this acceleration in our acquisition of new information is that a man of technics has trouble keeping pace with developments within his own field of speciality. By the same token, he has less chance to follow matters outside his own speciality, and, therefore, it would seem, less chance to relate his field of knowledge to others. With the compounding of these difficulties, it is perhaps not surprising that there is so little attempt to bring all of our knowledge and ideas together and to get our bearings and position as best we can in an ever changing and expanding universe of knowledge.

John Roddam's *The Changing Mind* makes this effort. It seeks to bring together, to collate and integrate the disciplines of atomic theory, cosmology, geology, biology, anthropology, history and psychology. The author finds a common ground and meaning in these fields which he develops into a theory of total evolution. Mr. Roddam focuses attention on two quite sentient propositions: that we have the consciousness and wit to perceive how we have developed to our present state; and that we can locate ourselves in our time and environment. It follows that for the first time man can be armed with knowledge of himself; can meet his challenges with this knowledge; and can cease playing the role of a pawn "in a game of whose rules we can no longer justifiably plead ignorance."

One may dispute Mr. Roddam's conclusions and his marshaling of all scientific disciplines consistently to support his theory; but only with the effect of furthering attention on that which is a principal contribution of his book: the bringing together of scientific disciplines and relating them to our humanities, our evolution and ourselves. The author announces in the first sentence of his preface that this book is "about perspective." Mr. Roddam's own perspective about that to which it is important to address ourselves appears fresh and timely.

✪ JOHN S. WALKER practices law in Washington, D. C.

Phi Beta Kappa Book Award Winners for 1967

The Christian Gauss Award to Larzer Ziff for *The American 1890's* (Viking).

The Science Award to Haig P. Papazian for *Modern Genetics* (Norton).

The Ralph Waldo Emerson Award to Robert Coles for *Children of Crisis* (Atlantic-Little, Brown).

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The Reader Replies

THE READER REPLIES *carries miscellaneous comments by readers and authors on various articles that have appeared in the magazine. All communications should be addressed to: Editor,* THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, *1811 Q Street, N.W., Washington, D. C. 20009. Because of space limitations we cannot guarantee to print all letters received.*

—EDITOR

Please accept my sincere thanks for publishing Alice Walker's essay, "The Civil Rights Movement: What Good Was It?" in the Autumn issue.

In the monthly newsletter that is sent out to the members of our congregation, it has been customary for me to include a recent sermon that I preached here. After reading Miss Walker's essay, I wondered if permission could be given to reprint it in place of a sermon. In this exurban area, I believe her eloquent and moving essay might do more to change attitudes than anything I could say.

A. J. POPPEN
Clover Hill Reformed Church
Flemington, New Jersey

* * *

May I commend your editorial staff for a fine piece of work in putting the Autumn issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR together. My appreciation was undoubtedly influenced by the effort I have had to exert over the past few weeks to keep my balance while I slithered, crawled and otherwise made my way through the mass of material on the activities of youth in revolt. Your combination of straightforward statements by members of the movements and historically wise commentary is the best balanced presentation I have found. In concept, it represents what we hope to do here in a three-week program on revolutionary elements in contemporary society; that is, to confront honestly and sympathetically the expressions of a concerned generation and to offer an intellectual context from which to evaluate them.

DENNIS M. JONES
Luther College
Decorah, Iowa

* * *

Perhaps the most remarkable thing about Marshall McLuhan is his ability to persuade large numbers of people, among them such sophisticated observers as Joseph Wood Krutch ["If You Don't Mind My Saying So," AS: Autumn, 1967] that the tenets that go to make up McLuhanism are altogether new and original. I find it a bit puzzling that no one has pointed out that many of Dr. McLuhan's prophetic notions have been around for quite some time.

Take, for example, his proposition that our new electric technology is transforming the world into a "tribal village" in which all of us live in the utmost proximity and are involved in one another's lives. If one turns to the article on "Communication" written by Edward Sapir for the 1931 edition of the *Encyclopedia of Social Sciences,* one will find Sapir saying that one of the effects of modern communication technology is that "the whole civilized world is made the psychological equivalent of a primitive tribe."

In *Understanding Media* McLuhan speaks of the tendency of electric media to create "a kind of organic interdependence among all the institutions of society." In *The Phenomenon of Man* and particularly in *Man's Place in Nature* Pierre Teilhard de Chardin speaks similarly of man's inevitable development in the direction of collective organization, toward a higher form of grouping of elements within a closed whole.

More than a decade ago, William H. Whyte, Jr., in *The Organization Man* called attention to the fact that the Protestant Ethic was being replaced by an entirely different set of social and moral assumptions in America. While still affirming the old individualistic faith, said Whyte, Americans were acting in a new way and adopting a new body of thought—a Social Ethic. "By Social Ethic," he wrote, "I mean that contemporary body of thought which makes morally legitimate the pressures of society against the individual. Its major propositions are three: a belief in the group as the source of creativity; a belief in 'belongingness' as the ultimate need of the individual; and a belief in the application of science to achieve the belongingness." Whyte regarded the new faith as essentially a utopian one and opposed it vigorously. McLuhan, by contrast, accepts the tenets of the faith and the faith itself, regarding individualism in all its manifestations as reactionary, envisioning a future characterized by tribal harmony on a world scale brought into being by the application of science.

None of this is intended to suggest that McLuhanism is simply an amalgam of borrowed

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ideas. All philosophies, good and bad alike, are debtors; perhaps the only novelty any can claim is a novelty of synthesis.

What I am suggesting is that future discussions of Marshall McLuhan—if such are necessary—take place in a context somewhat broader than Here and Now. McLuhanism has roots in the past. Part of what might be termed a latter-day Counter-Reformation, it is an aspect of a larger revolt against individualism, intellectualism and competitive striving, against what perhaps constitutes the essence of the Protestant Ethic, a belief in the possibility of individual salvation.

A. A. STERN
Hastings on Hudson, New York

* * *

An article such as Dr. Richard Noland's "Medical Education and Psychoanalysis" [AS: Summer, 1967] requires some sort of rebuttal on behalf of the medical profession. The work of Claude Bernard has indeed had an undeniable effect on medical education and practice, but to conclude from this that "contemporary theory of disease . . . descends from mid-nineteenth century materialism" is to draw a rather broad conclusion from decidedly limited evidence. Whereas medicine has an avowed practical purpose, the preservation of mankind from disease, it has wisely not limited its scope to disease. Medicine demands of its followers a relatively extensive knowledge of basic and clinical science, as well as a capability in the art of ministering to the ill. Specifically regarding microbiology (not bacteriology), the study of the human pathogens actually comprises a small section of the course work. The major portion of the curriculum is concerned with pure biology, biochemistry, genetics, immunology and virology. Similar situations exist in the other basic disciplines, and from these the medical student draws the conclusions that will be expressed as therapeutic efforts. Furthermore, to say that "it is a failure of the physician to operate with an adequate conception of what a physician is . . ." is a bit harsh. Can one really believe that a person who spends his life dealing with humans learns nothing in the process? The proper study of mankind is still man.

Finally, to relegate psychology into "one of the humanistic and behavioral sciences" is to forget the vessel in which the mind resides. The lay analyst suggested by Dr. Noland would be and frequently is of considerable assistance to the psychiatrist; psychologists are frequently utilized in the treatment of patients. Nevertheless, rather than criticize the medical profession for its attention to physiologic detail in handling mental disease, I would be tempted to commend it for its thoroughness in ruling out organic pathology prior to initiating psychotherapy. Rather than "stunting psychoanalysis," the profession is simply attempting to do its work well—a brain tumor masking as a paranoid psychosis, or chronic meningitis appearing as hallucinations, is not adequately treated by a "humanist."

I am in agreement with much of what Dr. Noland says in his discussion, but I feel that the greater part of his criticism is unwarranted. Medicine deserves better from those that it tries so hard to serve.

J. JOSEPH MARR, M.D.
Saint Louis University

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